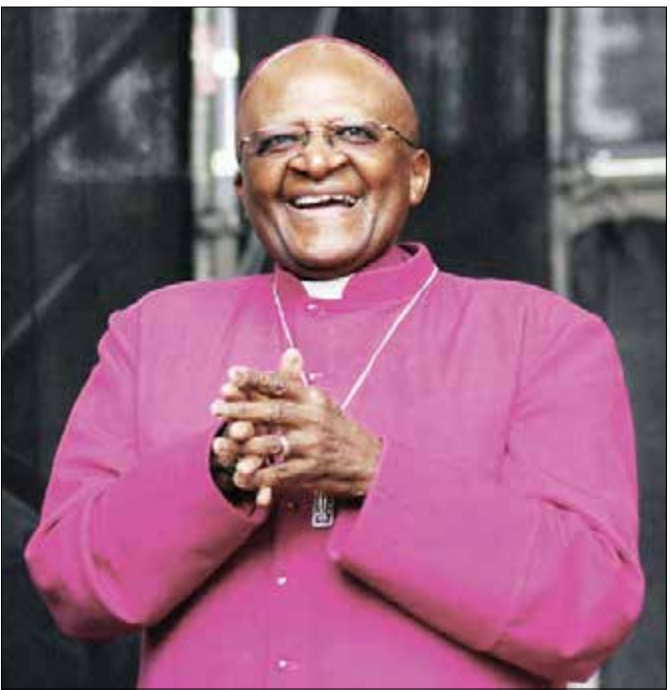




World dignitaries react to death of Bishop Desmond Tutu



South Africa's leading advocate for change and reconciliation under a black majority rule and the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Bishop Tutu, died in Cape Town December 26 at the age of 90.

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Correspondent

Long before Nelson Mandela won his freedom from 27 years of imprisonment fighting apartheid in South Africa, Archbishop Desmond Tutu earned the moniker “the nation’s conscience.”

White and black residents of the popular African nation lauded the bishop for his relentless fight to unite races and end the racist system of apartheid.

South Africa’s leading advocate for change and reconciliation under a black majority rule and the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Bishop Tutu, died in Cape Town December 26 at the age of 90. South Africa President Cyril Ramaphosa first confirmed the bishop’s passing.

“He was a leader of principle and pragmatism who gave meaning to the biblical insight that faith without works is dead,” Ramaphosa exclaimed.

A spokesperson for the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation said Bishop Tutu succumbed to cancer after a decades-long battle with the disease. Bishop Tutu reportedly had been hospitalized several times in the years since his 1997 diagnosis but continued his work.

His demands for freedom and advocating that justice be accomplished in a non-

violent manner helped earn Bishop Tutu the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984.

Born on October 7, 1931, in Klerksdorp, South Africa, Bishop Tutu’s mother, Aletha, was a domestic worker, and his father, Zacharia, was a teacher. Bishop Tutu was baptized a Methodist, but his family would later join the Anglican Church, according to his official biography.

When he was 12, his family moved to Johannesburg. Bishop Tutu often spoke of Rev. Trevor Huddleston, a white preacher who opposed apartheid. Rev. Huddleston earned the young Tutu’s admiration because of a simple gesture: Rev. Huddleston tipped his hat to Tutu’s mother.

Desmond Tutu studied at the Pretoria Bantu Normal College and earned a degree in teaching from the University of South Africa. He taught for three years but resigned after South Africa enacted the Bantu Education Act, lowering black students’ education standards.

He married Nomalizo Shenxane, and the couple remained together for more than 66 years until Bishop Tutu’s death. They have four children, Trevor, and three daughters, Theresa, Naomi and Mpho.

“Archbishop Desmond Tutu was a mentor, a friend, and a moral compass for me

Tutu

Continued on page 3

More than 800 faith leaders demand Biden, Senate pass Voting Rights Bill



“We cannot be clearer: you must act now to protect every American’s freedom to vote without interference and with confidence that their ballot will be counted and honored,” the faith leaders wrote in the letter released Thursday, December 23, 2021.

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Correspondent

Rev. Al Sharpton, Martin Luther King III, and more than 800 faith leaders from various religions are demanding that President Joe Biden and Senate Democrats immediately push through voting rights legislation.

“We cannot be clearer: you must act now to protect every American’s freedom to vote without interference and with confidence that their ballot will be counted and honored,” the faith leaders wrote in the letter released Thursday, December 23.

“Passing comprehensive voting rights legislation must be the number-one priority of the administration and Congress,” they wrote. In addition to Sharpton and King, those signing the letter included a mix of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish faith leaders. Rev. Aaron Frank of Horsham,

Pa., New York Rabbi Abby Cohen of Portland, Ore., and Rabbi Abby Michalesk of the Beth Israel Congregation in Bethesda, Md., were among the signatories. Rev. Aaron Frank of Horsham, Pa., was among the signatories.

Bill

Continued on pages 3

Longtime community activist Dorothy “Dot” Benford remembered

Leroy Johnson: ‘She never saw herself compromised by powers that be, whether black or white’

By Gail H.M. Brown, Ph.D.
Contributing Writer

From the surface, many may have viewed community activist and longtime Democrat Dorothy “Dot” Benford as the woman who would always run for some political office. However, those who knew her, whether friend or foe, agree that she had strong beliefs behind her actions.

Benford, 79, was found dead in her home Sunday, Dec. 26. According to the Coroner’s report, she is believed to have died of “natural causes.”

News of her death drew multiple condolences and reactions on and off social media, and across the state of Mississippi.

Kelcey Johnson posted Sunday evening, Dec. 26: Rest well,

Ms. Dorothy “DOT” Benford. The lady known for calling all of 90.1 FM radio shows. A political legend in her own right, Ms. Benford ran for everything and always said she ran to make things better. Ms. Benford and I had some hot rounds on the radio, whether we were on the same side or against one another. Then she would always call me after the program and say young man, you did well, but remember to tone it down, and you will be ok. Rest well my Democratic friend.”

Rep. Earl S. Bank posted this on his Facebook page Monday, Dec. 27: “I am filled with sadness and prayer. After a quiet family Christmas celebration, I

Benford

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Benford



Remembering Mary Alice Thatch, a legendary leader within The Black Press of America

Mississippi Link Newswire

The Black Press and African-American community have lost a legendary leader, fighter and advocate for human rights, civil rights and justice. Indeed, one of her most successful efforts made worldwide news.

Mary Alice Jervay Thatch, the third generation editor and publisher of *The Wilmington Journal*, died December 28 at the age of 78.

Thatch was the proud daughter of publisher Thomas C. Jervay Sr., and granddaughter of founder R.S. Jervay, a black printer who started *The Journal* originally as the *Cape Fear Journal* in 1927.

“T.C.” Jervay, as her father was known, made *The Journal* a centerpiece of the civil rights struggle in Wilmington “without fear or favor,” so much so that in 1973, a white supremacist firebombed the paper because it supported ten falsely criminally accused activists known as the Wilmington Ten.

Thatch would proudly tell how even being firebombed could not “run daddy out of town” or stop the next edition.

“That was the power of the Black Press,” said the woman who grew up at *The Journal* from the time she was a baby.

Thatch, who earned a bachelor’s degree from Elizabeth City State University, and a



Thatch

Master’s Degree from UNC-Greensboro before going into teaching, took over as *Journal* editor/publisher in 1996.

Under her leadership, the paper continued its tradition of being a strong voice for Wilmington’s African-American community with incisive reporting, and straight-forward editorials demanding justice for African Americans, challenging the Wilmington/New

Hanover County and North Carolina power structures, and maintaining, long, long before it was fashionable, that Black Lives Do Matter.

“The first African-American paper in the country was *Freedom’s Journal*,” Thatch one said. “The first line read something like ‘we are here to plead our own cause.’ That will always be the mission of the Black Press: to fulfill the

needs of the community we serve.”

She was tough on those who worked with her, because Thatch believed thoroughly in two things – the high standards set by her father in serving the community, and the belief that the African-American community always deserved the very best in effort and results.

She was a visionary who saw *The Journal* doing greater and greater things to serve the community, all the while fighting growing economic pressures that threatened to close her doors.

That didn’t stop her for using the paper to stand for voting rights, and demand that both the Democratic and Republican parties fairly patronize the Black Press with their advertising during election seasons. Thatch also led North Carolina Black Press in pushing voter registration, believing the black voter empowerment was a key to freedom.

But it was in 2011 when Thatch convinced the National Newspaper Publishers Association, of which she was a member and her father formerly led, to advocate for North Carolina to pardon the Wilmington Ten, the ten NC civil rights activists falsely convicted of firebombing a white-owned grocery store in 1971.

All ten, including leader Rev.

Ben Chavis, were sentenced to over 200 years in prison and had spent the last forty years with the false convictions attached to their names.

In 2012, Thatch led a team of black journalists, attorneys and activists in uncovering proof that the Ten were originally framed. She also led a campaign that garnered over 150,000 petition signatures asking then Gov. Beverly Perdue to grant pardons of innocence to the Ten.

On Dec. 31, 2012, as the last thing before she left office, Gov. Perdue indeed issued ten pardons of innocence to the Wilmington Ten, thus clearing their names. The official act cleared their names, and made worldwide news.

But it all started with the unmatched determination of a single black newspaper publisher.

Mary Alice Thatch was honored as Publisher of the Year by the NNPA the following year, in the finest tradition of Black Press advocacy.

Thatch was serving as the president of the North Carolina Black Publishers Association at the time of her death. She was also a past board member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), and past board member and secretary of the National Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation.

“On behalf of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, we extend our heartfelt condolences to the family of our beloved NNPA publisher and leader, Mary Alice Jervay Thatch (RIP),” said Rev. Ben Chavis, now president of the NNPA in a statement. “We will always fervently uphold her legacy and contribution to the Black Press of America and especially her leadership of the North Carolina Black Press Association (NCBPA). God bless.”

“She lived a gigantic meaningful life and was certainly a voice for Wilmington,” said attorney and NCCU Law Professor Irving Joyner. “It is not an understatement to loudly proclaim that she spoke ‘truth to power’ and did it in an unflinching manner.”

P.R. Jervay, Jr., NCBPA Media Services said, “Mary Alice’s strength, commitment and dedication to organization with a purpose was an inspiration to her fellow African-American publishers around the state.”

Mary Alice Jervay Thatch leaves to cherish her memory, a devoted husband, Rev. John L. Thatch; three daughters, Robin Thatch Johnson, Shawn Thatch and Johanna Thatch-Briggs; along with a host of family and friends.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete at this time.

**Because taking care
today, leads to an even
healthier tomorrow.**

 **MISSISSIPPI**
It's good to be Blue.

Bill

Continued from page 1

Sholom and Rev. Adam Russell Taylor.

King and his wife, Arndrea Waters King, organized the leaders and wrote the letter. The African American Christian Clergy Coalition joined them, Bend the Arc: Jewish Action and Faith in Public Life and others joined.

The Congressional Black Caucus has pushed legislation, including two voting rights bills blocked by the GOP. “This year, American democracy faced extraordinary challenges, from the violent insurrection on the U.S. Capitol to over 30 anti-voting bills pushed through state legislatures, intentionally designed to silence Black, Brown, Indigenous, immigrant, low-income, LG-BTQIA+, people with disabilities, and elderly and young voters,” the faith leaders wrote. “During this season of giving and community, we are painfully aware that the promise of American democracy is thwarted by systemic racism and a system that works for the few at the expense of the public good.”

The letter continued:

“It will continue on this path without prompt, substantive federal action. During the Civil Rights era, prominent leaders were driven by their faith to fight for equality. This is why we continue the push for voting rights today – our faith teaches us that each one of us deserves dignity and freedom.

“We cannot be clearer: you must act now to protect every American’s freedom to vote without interference and with confidence

that their ballot will be counted and honored. Passing comprehensive voting rights legislation must be the number-one priority of the administration and Congress.

“Nothing – including the filibuster – should stand in the way of passing the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, both of which have already passed the House and await Senate action and leadership. “The communities we represent will continue to sound the alarm until these bills are passed. While we come from different faiths, we are united by our commitment to act in solidarity with the most vulnerable among us.

“On Martin Luther King Jr. Day in January, we will accompany Martin Luther King III, Arndrea King, Yolanda Renee King, and voting rights advocates across the country to honor Dr. King’s legacy by calling for Congress and the President to restore and expand access to the ballot for all voters. It’s time to stop lamenting the state of our democracy and take action to address it.

“As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., so valiantly said in his Give Us The Ballot address, “the denial of this sacred right [to vote] is a tragic betrayal of the highest mandates of our democratic tradition.”

“That is why this Martin Luther King Day, we will not accept empty promises. Congress must serve the nation and future generations by immediately passing voting rights legislation.”

Tutu

Continued from page 1

and so many others,” former U.S. President Barack Obama said in a statement. “A universal spirit, Archbishop Tutu was grounded in the struggle for liberation and justice in his own country, but also concerned with injustice everywhere. He never lost his impish sense of humor and willingness to find humanity in his adversaries, and Michelle and I will miss him dearly.”

England’s Royal Family tweeted condolences from Queen Elizabeth.

Ethiopia Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali also tweeted out his sympathies. “I join other world leaders in expressing my sadness at the passing of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, who has been the embodiment of the struggle for liberation,” Prime Minister Ali wrote. “Ethiopia sends its condolences to the people and the government of South Africa.”

Officials at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center in Atlanta also released a statement of sadness.

“Our hearts go out to his family. Archbishop Tutu was a global human rights activist and a compassionate, bold, consistent voice on behalf of the ostracized and oppressed,” the King Center officials wrote. “May we carry his love forward.”

Benford

Continued from page 1

learned of the death of a friend, a supporter and woman who always spoke for what she thought was right and correct, a Lanier graduate, Ms. Dorothy “Dot” Benford.”

Holmes County District 4 Supervisor Leroy Johnson told *The Mississippi Link* in a recent interview: “Our paths crossed for the first time in 1985 when we had the Special Election for the Second Congressional seat in Mississippi,” said Johnson. “In the campaign that Mike Espy ran [then], Dorothy was one of the front people. I met her at that time when I was working for the Rural Organizing and Culture Center (ROCC) in Holmes County. She was one of those people who introduced me to Mike Espy and brought me on board as one of those people in Getting Out to Vote,” he recalled.

Johnson shared that in his years of working with and knowing Benford, she was “strong in her belief in helping poor people and poor black people in particular.” He shared the following attribute of whom he knew Benford to be: “One, she had a very avid belief in God with a “liberation theology” when it came to women; two, she knew what her truth was. She would go down

to the floor mat for her truth; and three, she believed in herself and surrounding herself with people who believe in what she brought to the table.”

Johnson added that Benford was not afraid. “She never saw herself compromised by the powers that be, whether black or white, he said.

In 1988, she ran for the 2nd District Congressional seat held by Mike Espy, who she had helped campaign for and who in 1986 was elected as the first African American to represent Mississippi in Congress since the 1800s.

In the Nov. 3, 2020, general election, Benford made an eye-raising showing in Mississippi’s 3rd Congressional District’s U.S. House race against Republican Michael Guest. She received 120,782 votes to Guest’s 221,064 (*BallotPedia.org*).

“Dorothy wanted to make sure that positions were not just handed to folks,” said Bill Washington, who considered himself a friend although there were times they were on opposite sides. “She would run because nobody else would run. She would put up a challenge like she did in this last congressional race against Mi-

chael Guest. The odds were tough, and she knew that, but she wanted to make sure that he had an opponent. If she did not do it, he was going to have a clear path, didn’t have to campaign. He had to earn it.”

Washington emphasized that Benford also “made a good showing in the Public Service Commissioner race. Dorothy was involved; she was engaged. If she felt she could make a difference, she would do it. No grass grew under Dorothy Benford’s feet.”

Mississippi Senator Sollie Norwood had this to say about Benford:

“A dedicated community servant, that was relentless in her commitment to improve the quality of life for her fellowman. Ms. Dot, as I affectionately called her, will be sorely missed but her work will far out live her days on earth. Let’s keep her works going to make the change she fought for a reality one day. Rest in Peace, Ms. Dot.”

Norwood said her works he referenced in his comment include, but is not limited to: voter registration, Get Out The Vote drives, voter education projects, and now, the redistricting cam-

paign.

The Lanier High School beauty queen was more than a champion voice for the community on the political front. She was also an entrepreneur and advocate for education.

“She was tremendously concerned about education and wanting the best for her children and everyone’s children,” said well-known Mississippi businessman Socrates Garrett.

“She was a friend; she and I went into many battles together. Dorothy could bring it and she could take it. She wanted to change the way the business community was being treated,” he said. Garrett shared that Benford was a businessperson. “She had several businesses. She had used car lots and things of that nature. She was a friend of the business community. She always wanted improvement where minority businesses would do better than they were doing with our government. So, she fought often with all mayors in her advocacy for the minority business community. She fought all the way up to her demise.”

At press time, funeral arrangements for Benford were not known.

First U.S. gay bishop remembers Tutu’s generosity, kindness

By Holly Ramer
Associated Press/

In 2008, when the Right Rev. Gene Robinson of New Hampshire was excluded from a global Anglican gathering because of his sexuality, Desmond Tutu, who died Sunday, came to his defense.

“Gene Robinson is a wonderful human being, and I am proud to belong to the same church as he,” Tutu wrote in the foreword to a book Robinson published that year.

Robinson, who in 2003 became the U.S. Episcopal Church’s first openly gay bishop, said Sunday he has been trying to live up to those words ever since.

“It was quite surreal because I was taking grief from literally around the world,” he said in a phone interview. “There was



Bishop Desmond Tutu

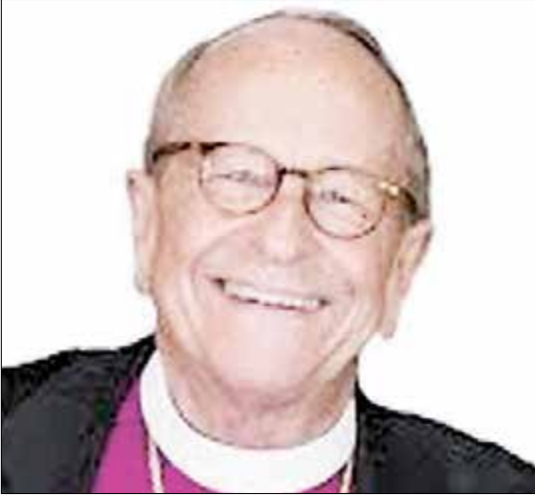
probably at that time, and maybe still, no one better known around the world than Desmond Tutu. It was an astounding gesture of generosity and kindness.”

Tutu, South Africa’s Nobel

Peace Prize-winning activist for racial justice, died at age 90. He was an uncompromising foe of apartheid, South Africa’s brutal regime of oppression against its black majority, as well as a leading advocate for

LGBTQ rights and same-sex marriage.

“Now, with gay marriage, it’s hard to remember how controversial this was, and for him to stand with me at the very time I was being excluded ... it com-



Rev. Gene Robinson

pletely floored me,” said Robinson.

In the foreword to Robinson’s book, Tutu also apologized for the “cruelty and injustice” the LGBTQ community had suffered at the hands of fellow Anglicans.

Tutu, Robinson said, used his own experience of oppression to understand and empathize with others.

“He used that as a window into what it was like to be a woman, what it was like to be someone in a wheelchair or for someone to LGBTQ or whatever it was,” he said. “It was the thing that taught him to be compassionate.”

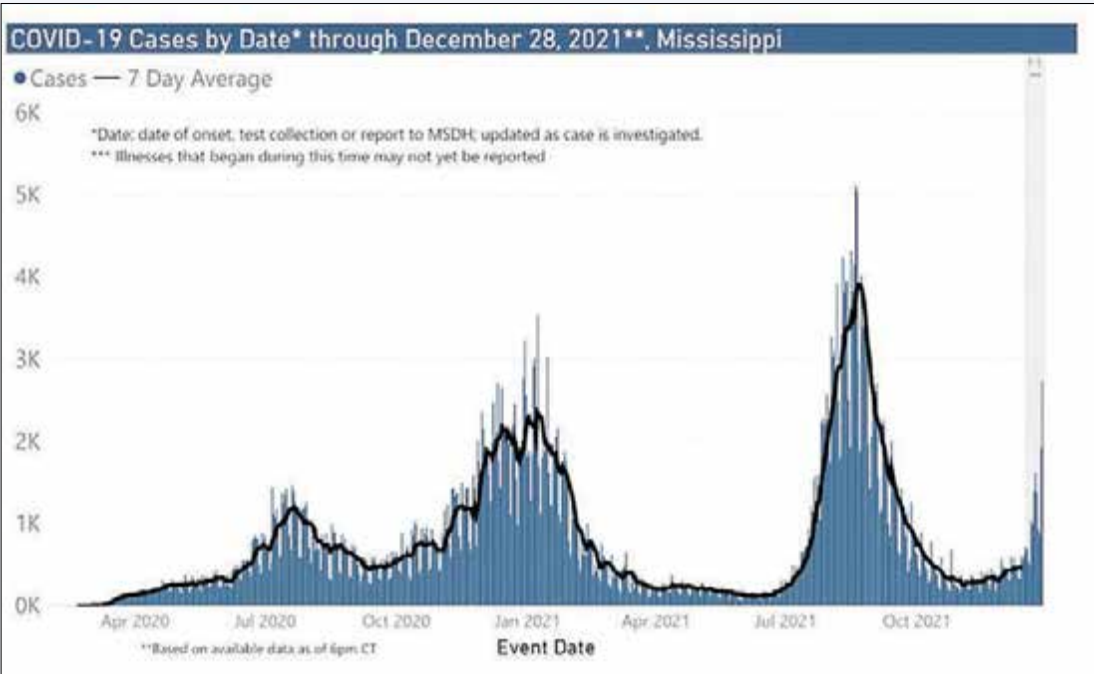
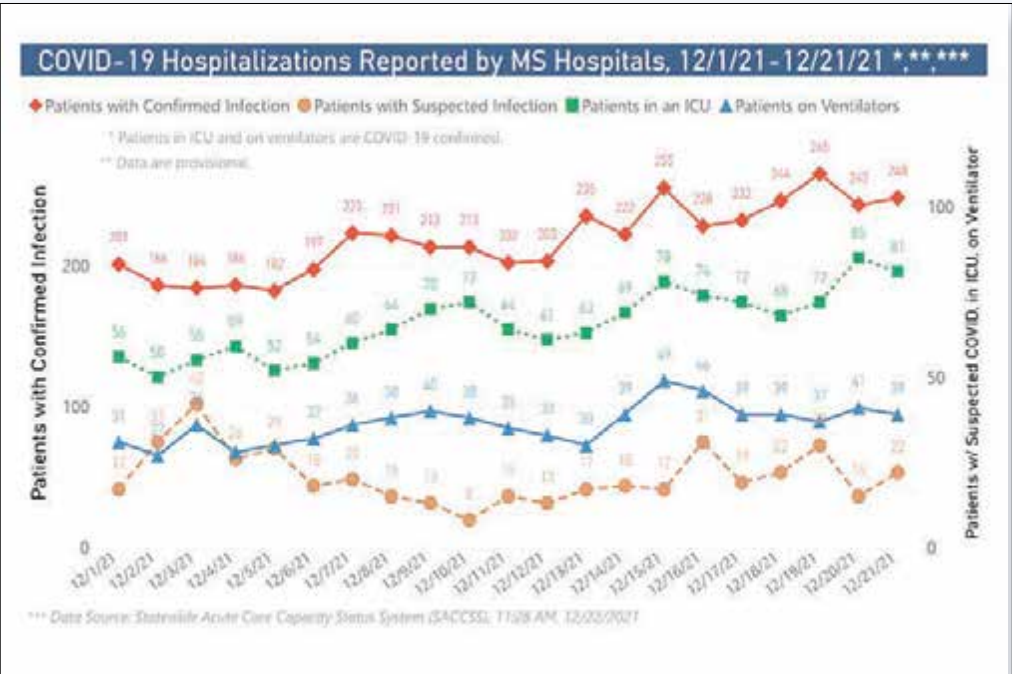
Robinson recalled the way Tutu’s laugh rippled across crowds of thousands as well as a private moment when they prayed together in the seminary

Robinson graduated from in New York.

“There was nobody in pain that he wasn’t concerned about, whether that pain was a physical ailment of some kind or a mental illness or something to do with cruelty or degradation. It pained him,” Robinson said. “To sit in the room and hear him praying about those people was about as close to knowing the heart of God as I ever expect to know. I mean, I don’t even need to know more than that.”

Robinson served as the ninth bishop of New Hampshire until his retirement in early 2013 and later as a fellow at the Center for American Progress. Now 74, he recently retired as the vice president of religion and senior pastor at the Chautauqua Institution.

MISSISSIPPI COVID-19 UPDATE



The Meaning of Kwanzaa

Special to The Mississippi Link

Kwanzaa was created by Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966 to celebrate family, culture and heritage, and is modeled after the first harvest celebrations in Africa.

There are 7 Principles and 7 Primary Symbols that emphasize a unique set of values and ideals during the 7 days of Kwanzaa... also spelled with 7 letters.

The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa, as determined by Karenga, are umoja (unity), kujichagulia (self-determination), ujima (collective work and responsibility), ujamaa (cooperative economics), nia (purpose), kuumba (creativity) and imani (faith).

When observing Kwanzaa, the black candle symbolizes the people themselves, the three red candles are for the struggle or blood shed in the past, and the three green candles represent the Earth or the abundance of possibilities the future holds.



This is Christmas, This is Love

Special to The Mississippi Link

On December 20, 2021, Mary Church Terrell Literary Club presented individual gift Christmas bags to the 70 residents and the manager at the Federated Tower Apartment Complex in Clinton, MS. The gift bags included a Walmart gift card for their personal shopping, care items, masks, crossword puzzles, blankets ad snacks.

The Christmas celebration with community residents and community groups is an annual activity for Mary Church Terrell Literary Club providing another opportunity for members to share the joy of giving.



Picture left to right, Alberta Smith, Tina Littleton, apartment manager, Dr. Ramona Cork and Dr. Delores Hopkins, president, Mary Church Terrell Literary Club

Women for Progress, Inc. hosts annual Kwanzaa celebration

By Angela Stewart
Contributing Writer

Women for Progress hosted its 43rd Annual Kwanzaa Celebration at the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum at 5:30 pm Dec. 28. It was a hybrid event with an in-person audience as well as streaming live on Facebook.

This year's Nguzo Saba (7 Principles) Honorees/WFP Candle-Lighters were:

Umoja (Unity): Dr. Jerrick Rose/ Niketa Pechan
Kujichagulia (Self-Determination): Dr. Fred Kency, Jr./Ms. Colendula Norton-Green

Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility): Natalie A. Collier (Tonja Murphy) Nekeshia B. Clark



C. Liegh McInnis and Pamela D.C. Junior, co-hosts

Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics): Hermon T. Cotton/Judge Crystal Wise Martin

Nia (Purpose): Sabrina Howard/Attorney L. Patricia Ice

Kuumba (Creativity): Sheriff Tyree Jones, Jr./Jennifer Riley-Collins

Imani (Imani): Dwanna Stanley (Willie Jones)/Diana Evans



Left to Right: Willie Jones, Crystal Wise Martin, Diana McCree-Evans, Niketa Pechan, Angela Stewart, Monica Stewart Wilson, Sabrina Wright, Tonja Murphy, Jennifer Riley-Collins and Pamela D. C. Junior

Monica Stewart Wilson, daughter of the founder of WFP, the late Dorothy Stewart Samuel, served as this year's Kwanzaa chair. Monica Wilson's twin

daughters, Grace and Rachel Wilson joined her on stage to provide the welcome. The program included music by Jason Hairston, a call to action by WFP

President Willie Jones, a drum call by Malcolm Shepherd and the Bantu Drummers, an innovation spotlight by Hermon T. Cotton, creator the KIDZAMM app and an COVID-19 Update by Dr. Jasmine Kency.

Angela Stewart, vice-president of WFP, served as griot for the Liberation Ceremony and Harambee Circle.

The event was made possible by the generous support of Dependable Source Corp. Center for Community & Workforce Development, Greater Jackson Arts Council, The May Law Firm, PLLC, Mississippi Humanities Council and Mississippi Department of Archives History/Two Mississippi Museums.

MS family moves into Habitat for Humanity home

By Danny Mcarthur
Associated Press

After nearly five years, the Garth family has finally moved into a home made just for them.

“This just felt right for my family,” Nicole Garth said, standing inside her family’s new home. “This is where we decided to put down our roots.”

The family received the keys to their new Habitat for Humanity home Wednesday, Dec. 8, during a home dedication. Nicole Garth will live in the home alongside husband Jari Garth and three children: oldest daughter and Ole Miss graduate Alexandria Copeland, 21-year-old Jonavon Edwards and 13-year-old Tupelo Middle schooler Jahree Garth. Nicole Garth already has plans for what she wants to do in her new home.

“I’m looking forward to cooking,” she said with a laugh. “I want to cook a meal that takes about two days to finish.”

The home arrives after years of sacrifice and loss for the Garth family. An advertisement led Nicole Garth to apply to the HFH program. After applying multiple times, she finally received news in 2016 that her application had been accepted. She’d be getting a home.

Though it took nearly five years from the Garths’ application was accepted to the completion of the home, the time went fast, Nicole Garth said. The Garth parents waited for the right location to avoid having to change their youngest son to a new school district, moving only when he became old enough to attend one central school. Safety was also a major concern for the family.

Construction of the house, once begun, took roughly four months to finish.

In order to receive a home, each Habitat family agrees to complete 200 sweat equity hours on a different recipient’s home, plus 100 hours on their own. Although Habitat for Humanity helps its beneficiaries move into affordable homes, the houses aren’t free. The houses are built using volunteer labor,



Members of the Garth family, from left, Alexandria Copeland, Nicole Garth, Jahree Garth, Jari Garth and Jonavon Edwards, stand outside their new home in Tupelo, Miss. on Dec. 15, 2021. The Garths built the home with the help of the Northeast Mississippi Habitat for Humanity. It's the groups second finished home of the year. THOMAS WELLS/THE NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI DAILY JOURNAL VIA AP

and oftentimes much of the materials are donated, keeping the cost down. Families receive mortgages, albeit interest-free, so they won’t struggle to pay each month.

“Every dime that’s put in this house, you have to pay it back as a family,” Garth said. “It makes it more fulfilling, to know that you put the nail here and a screw here on something that you’re paying for and you worked on.”

Our Favorite Day
Northeast Mississippi Habitat for Humanity President Mary Ann Plasencia said she loves dedication day. There’s nothing more joyous than handing a family the keys to their new house – their new home.

“This is our favorite day in the life of our ministry,” Plasencia said during the dedication ceremony for the Garths’ new home. “We love to celebrate the culmination of all the hard work and, really, to celebrate the beginning of new life in the neighborhood.” During the dedication, Nicole

Garth’s husband and children presented her with a portrait of her as a child standing beside her mother, who died of cancer just as the family began building the home. Garth said her mother helped ensure her daughter put in her required sweat equity hours. Her portrait, Garth said, will feature prominently in the new home.

“It was important that my kids surprised me with having a memorial set up with a picture of me and her on there together, so that she’s here sharing this occasion with us. That was just awesome,” Garth said.

Habitat for Humanity Construction Supervisor Chris Partin said the house will stand as a symbol of God’s care. Many of the Garths’ new neighbors are fellow Habitat families.

“(They) are going to know what you guys have been through, and they’re going to be understanding of what you guys are doing and where you’re at,” Partin said. He noted the sacrifice of time, and working alongside other

families on their homes, as proof of how much they deserved it.

“It may seem like we’re at the finish line, because you’ve worked so hard to get here, but this is not the finish line. This is the very beginning,” Partin said. “You’re surrounded by people who are going to love you.”

Volunteering with Habitat for Humanity taught the family the importance of working together, sharing and bringing the community together for once common goal, Nicole Garth said. The experience has inspired the Garth family to pay it forward in the future.

Nicole Garth and her husband discussed how they could help and think they’ll continue to help build homes. However, giving back started with Christmas.

“The house is going to be our Christmas present,” Garth said. “We’re going to take money that we would use for buying gifts for each other, and we’re simply going to bless some other people.”

MDAH launches family genealogy fellowships

The Mississippi Link newswire

The Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) will award fellowships of up to \$2,000 to support individuals hoping to locate information related to their family history using resources available at MDAH. The fellowships are a part of a year-long initiative in 2022 to expand understanding of the Great Migration and its impact on Mississippi and the nation.

“The Great Migration is the largest internal migration of people in U.S. history. Many families who left Mississippi still feel a close connection to our state. We’re glad to be able to help them come back to Mississippi and research their roots,” said MDAH director Katie Blount.

Ten research stipends of up to \$2,000 will be awarded to ten researchers to travel to Jackson, MS, and conduct three consecutive days of research at MDAH. Selected applicants may schedule their fellowships during the months of February, April, May, June and July, 2022. The stipend may be used to cover travel, accommodations and other expenses accrued during the researcher’s time at MDAH such as the cost of copies.

The Great Migration Initiative is a partnership between MDAH and the Mississippi Museum of Art (MMA). Additional programs and events include the exhibitions A Movement in Every Direction: Legacies of the Great Migration at MMA, The Negro Motorist Green Book Guide at MDAH, joint teacher workshop and other programs related to art and history.

For more information on the Great Migration Initiative, email info@mdah.ms.gov.

Mississippi district seeks ways to mitigate gun violence

The Associated Press

Community leaders in north Mississippi are discussing how gun violence affects children, as victims and participants.

The Commercial Dispatch reported the Columbus Municipal School District hosted a meeting to explore problems and possible solutions. At the beginning, a bill chimed 71 times – once for each student in the district who has experienced gun violence the past five years as a victim or shooter.

“The impact of gun violence, especially with youth, traumatizes our children,” Superintendent Cherie Labat said. “It makes our school district a triage for the wounded. Until the most vulnerable children in this community are our top priority, change cannot happen.”

Labat mentioned Jadah Brewer, an 8-year-old Columbus student who was shot to death at home in June.

“I promised myself when Jada died that her death and the deaths of every child lost would not be in vain,” Labat said.

“The fury in my heart is for the students and the educators who have been impacted by gun violence.”

Jadah was a smart, precocious 8-year old, “just a beautiful young lady,” her Gifted and Talented teacher Heather Rowland recalled.

Jadah was in a summer school program, working on a history project with classmates. Rowland said that one day, Jadah gave her a hug in the morning and another hug to say goodbye in the afternoon.

That night, Rowland learned Jadah had been killed. The next day, the teacher had to tell other children their classmate had died.

“It’s very hard to explain to them because there is no explanation, really,” said Rowland, who has taught in the Columbus Municipal School District for 14 years.

Rowland said some of her former students “have been in the paper because they are the ones who fired the gun. My heart breaks for them, too, because I

knew them when they were in the first grade.”

District Attorney Scott Colom said he finds it troubling that people sometimes refuse to give information to police after shootings.

“We’ve had situations (where) people have been shot, in the hospital, 16 years old, ‘F the police. I ain’t saying nothing. I don’t know who shot me.’ Well, obviously you know who shot you,” Colom said.

Colom said the community needs to have “tough conversations” about youth access to guns. As an example, he talked about being suspended three days after getting in a fight in middle school.

“The difference now is that people involved in that fight tend to have guns or knives,” Colom said. “When you are young, you have a gun and your brain is not fully developed and you have not developed the (relationship with) your parents that maybe you should have, your self-control is lower than it should be, and you therefore

are more likely to make bad decisions. And you have a gun, so it makes that bad decision worse than you could ever imagine.”

“The Columbus School District requires students to enter the building through metal detectors at least three times a week, or more often after a violent event has occurred in the community,” Labat said. She said metal detectors have found no firearms, but they have found knives and “gun paraphernalia.”

The district’s violence prevention program includes parent meetings and crisis response training for bus drivers, as well as exposing children to workforce development training that would give them opportunities to join the middle class as adults.

Labat said the district is evaluating options for hiring more social workers and school resource officers, as well as “re-calibrating” officers’ pay to assure full staffing.

The school district also is working with the district at-



torney’s office on a restorative justice program. To explain how it works, Colom again turned to his own middle school fight experience.

“After we got suspended, there was no communication

from the school. Nobody ever asked us why we fought,” he said. “That’s what restorative justice does. It tries to get to the root cause of the problem before it escalates into something worse.”

Revisions to Alabama history teaching standards delayed

The Associated Press

With much of the nation debating what and how to teach about history, the state of Alabama has delayed a revision to its classroom standards for teaching history for years after they were both praised and criticized by an educational think tank.

Officials this fall postponed an update to the state's social studies course of study for five to six years, citing a positive review from the Fordham Institute, an ideologically conservative educational group that has become recognized for its audits of state history and civics standards, al.com reported.

A notice about the delay came in November, a month after Alabama officials voted to ban so-called critical race theory in K-12 schools, a move that has left some students and teachers worried about how to discuss race and racism in the classroom.

A review published by the Fordham Institute called Alabama's standards for teaching civics and U.S. history "exemplary," citing an emphasis on facts and a "rigorous and thorough overview" of the nation's past.

But the organization also noted some gaps in Alabama's history



State Superintendent Eric Mackey told members that all future meetings had been "postponed until further notice."

instruction, saying that coverage of the Fourteenth Amendment is insufficient and that its standard for explaining Alabama's secession from the Union "is unbalanced."

"There is a somewhat ambiguous reference to 'states' rights' in the fifth-grade standard on the causes of the Civil War, which should either be removed or more clearly subordinated to 'the issue of slavery' to avoid misinterpretation," the report stated. "And the decision to lump together the many changes

that have occurred in the seven decades of U.S. History 'since World War II' is unfortunate."

A committee met once in February to discuss revisions to Alabama's social studies course of study, which hasn't changed since 2010. But in September, State Superintendent Eric Mackey told members that all future meetings had been "postponed until further notice."

"As you may know, our current standards have been recognized for excellence, including the most recent recognition by the Fordham Institute as one of only five states to be ranked as exemplary in both Civics and U.S. History," Mackey wrote in a September memo. "As important as social studies is, with a number of important topics to cover in the next few years, we believe the next steps include updating and aligning our Career and Technical Education (CTE), arts and sciences. We remain undeterred in our commitment to high-quality social studies in all grades."

A lead researcher at the Fordham Institute didn't agree with the delay.

"A lot could happen in two decades," said David Griffith, a senior research and policy associate who led the institute's recent review

of social studies standards. "Per the report, Alabama's history standards for the post-1970 era are already a little thin, so it's concerning that the problem could get worse before it gets better."

The Alabama State Department of Education does not mandate the teaching of any particular curriculum. Rather, the agency adopts standards about things students are expected to know and be able to do by certain grades. Typically, those standards are updated every five to ten years, but the recent delay spells an even longer waiting period for social studies standards, which were up for review this year.

Griffith, who led the Fordham review, said the institute generally recommends states revise their standards every 10 years. Many states are behind schedule, he said, but to his knowledge Alabama is the first to cite the strength of its current standards as a reason for delaying revisions. The decision that could dock them points in future reviews, said Griffith.

"We definitely penalize states that haven't addressed important historical developments in their standards, and the post-2010 era has definitely seen its fair share of history," he said.

JPS virtual Winter Convocation scheduled for January 5, 2022



The Mississippi Link Newswire

Jackson Public Schools will host a virtual Convocation Wednesday, January 5, 2022, from 8 a.m.-9 a.m. It will include a panel discussion hosted by Superintendent Dr. Erick L. Greene and a spoken word from a JPS scholar.

This event will be live-streamed from the Board Room on the JPS YouTube page (<https://www.youtube.com/jpsitv>).

It may also be accessed at (www.jackson.k12.ms.us)

Click the YouTube icon on the right side of the screen.

The Mississippi Link™

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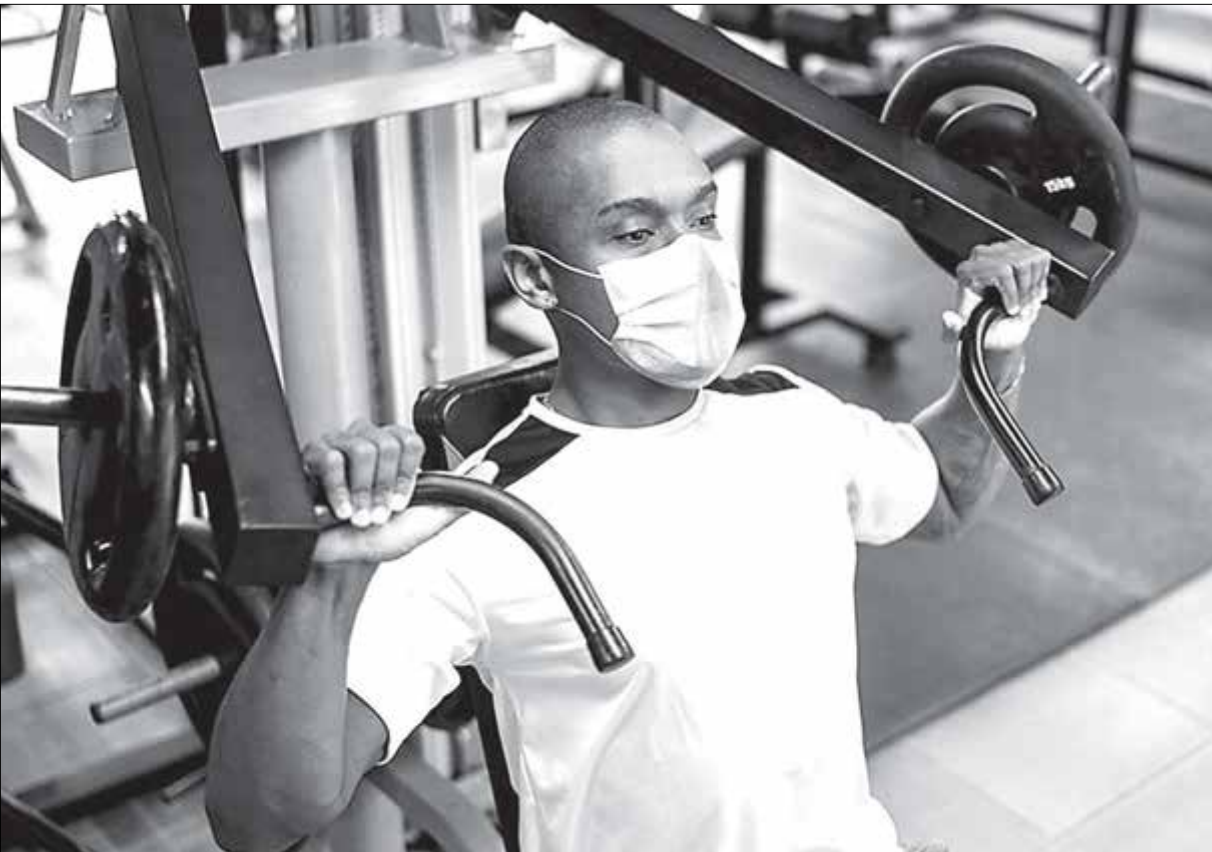
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Gyms and COVID-19



By Vince Faust
Tips to Be Fit

Gyms should be a place to get healthier. But your gym can be one of the biggest places to transmit COVID-19. Gyms provide heat and humidity along with secretions from hundreds of perspiring bodies that are breathing hard, which provide the perfect breeding grounds for viruses. Research shows that the COVID-19 virus can live in the air for up to 3 hours. It can get into your lungs if someone who has it breathes out and you breathe that air in.

Settings where transmission of the COVID-19 virus spreads more easily:

- Crowded places
 - Close-contact settings, especially where people have conversations very near each other
 - Confined and enclosed spaces with poor ventilation
- Sounds just like a gym.

In a study researchers at the University of Arizona applied a

noninfectious virus to an office door. The virus was not native to the office. Within 4 hours the virus was detected on more than half of the office surfaces and on the hands of almost all of the office workers. In a gym I would think that if one person has the virus in your gym everyone would be exposed through the air and the hard surfaces in the gym.

Research shows that surface survival studies indicate that SARS-CoV-2 and other coronaviruses can survive for 3 days (72 hours) on common non-porous surfaces like stainless steel, plastic and glass. The COVID-19 coronavirus can live in water for a few days, potentially even a few weeks. But it doesn't mean that it's present in large enough concentrations to infect you. Remember the water fountain is made of stainless steel and can harbor the virus for 72 hours.

Masks are your first line of

defense in the gym. Wear your mask at all times in the gym. It does not cut off your oxygen.

The CDC recommendations for wearing a mask:

- Wash your hands before putting on your mask
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily

• CDC does not recommend use of mask or cloth masks for source if they have an exhalation valve or vent

The CDC recommendations for removing a mask:

- Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops
- Handle only by the ear loops or ties
- Fold outside corners together

Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose and mouth when re-

moving and wash hands immediately after removing. You may want to have a second mask on hand to replace your mask if it gets damp. Be sure to wash or sanitize your hands before you change your mask.

Research shows that your heart rate, respiratory rate, blood pressure, oxygen level and time of exhaustion are not affected by wearing a mask during moderate to strenuous physical activity. It is safe to exercise at peak exercise in both an N95, surgical or a cloth face-mask.

I didn't feel anything different the first time I wore a mask while exercising but you might be different. If you feel uncomfortable this is normal and may be similar to how you felt wearing a mask at work, school or while shopping. These feelings will decrease over time. You will have no difference in your exercise output.

Most people use a towel dur-

ing their workout. A workout towel will not protect you from virus in the gym. Gym towels only remove sweat and moisture. Your towel may even help transfer germs to other surfaces.

You should use alcohol wipes to wipe down equipment before and after you use them. Make sure the equipment is dry before you use it. The chemical in the wipe could hurt your skin. If you use an exercise mat for class you should bring your own mat. You should also wipe it down after each use.

If you have a chronic lung disease, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, mesothelioma or pulmonary hypertension, talk with your healthcare provider before attempting any physical activity while wearing a mask. If your doctor determines you can't wear a mask in the gym you should not go to the gym.

If you feel any of the follow-

ing symptoms when exercising, you should stop and take a break until they subside:

- Overall discomfort
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Significant shortness of breath
- Muscular weakness
- Drowsiness

COVID-19 is spread mainly from person to person, through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. According to the CDC, COVID symptoms can appear anywhere from two to 14 days after someone is exposed to the virus. Anyone with symptoms should get tested for COVID. If you have fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea don't go to the gym.

Mississippi reports jump in COVID cases over 5 days

The Associated Press

The Mississippi State Department of Health is reporting more than 7,000 new COVID-19 cases over a five-day period.

The department posted new numbers Monday, covering cases confirmed from Wednesday through Sunday.

The state is seeing a significant increase in cases compared to just a few weeks ago. During the two weeks from Nov. 23 to Dec. 6, Mississippi confirmed 5,185 new cases of COVID-19.

In the Jackson area on Monday, parking lots were full at medical clinics that offer COVID-19 testing. A long line of cars waited at a north Jackson church with a mobile test site in the parking lot.

The Health Department Monday also reported an increase in the number of people hospitalized with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in recent days: The number was 326 on Sunday, up from 265 a week earlier.

The department did not immediately provide new information about the number of cases from the Omicron variant.

Mississippi has confirmed more than 532,500 cases of COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic in early 2020.

CDC updates and shortens recommended isolation and quarantine period for general population

The Mississippi Link wire

Given what we currently know about COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, CDC is shortening the recommended time for isolation from 10 days for people with COVID-19 to 5 days, if asymptomatic, followed by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others. The change is motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after. Therefore, people who test positive should isolate for 5 days and, if asymptomatic at that time, they may leave isolation if they can continue to mask for 5 days to minimize the risk of infecting others.

Additionally, CDC is updating the recommended quarantine period for those exposed to COVID-19. For people who are unvaccinated or

are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days. Alternatively, if a 5-day quarantine is not feasible, it is imperative that an exposed person wear a well-fitting mask at all times when around others for 10 days after exposure. Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure. For all those exposed, best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day 5 after exposure. If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

Isolation relates to behavior after

a confirmed infection. Isolation for 5 days followed by wearing a well-fitting mask will minimize the risk of spreading the virus to others. Quarantine refers to the time following exposure to the virus or close contact with someone known to have COVID-19. Both updates come as the Omicron variant continues to spread throughout the U.S. and reflects the current science on when and for how long a person is maximally infectious.

Data from South Africa and the United Kingdom demonstrate that vaccine effectiveness against infection for two doses of an mRNA vaccine is approximately 35%. A COVID-19 vaccine booster dose restores vaccine effectiveness against infection to 75%. COVID-19 vaccination decreases the risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. CDC strongly encourages

COVID-19 vaccination for everyone 5 and older and boosters for everyone 16 and older. Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our communities.

The following is attributable to CDC Director, Dr. Rochelle Walensky:

"The Omicron variant is spreading quickly and has the potential to impact all facets of our society. CDC's updated recommendations for isolation and quarantine balance what we know about the spread of the virus and the protection provided by vaccination and booster doses. These updates ensure people can safely continue their daily lives. Prevention is our best option: get vaccinated, get boosted, wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial and high community transmission, and take a test before you gather."



P R E S E R V E D

I surrender.... for real

By Shewanda Riley
Columnist



Back in 2008, I repeatedly heard one phrase describe how some saw the year: “I’m gonna get it straight in 2008!” When I heard the phrase the first time, I liked it and said that I was going to use it for myself. But I have another one that makes more sense for what I’ve been dealing with lately. “Fighting with God is stupid.”

A few months ago, I thought I was fighting for God. Some things shifted that made me see that most of the time I was really fighting against God (I went down swinging, but I lost every time).

Just as I was dealing with this truth, a close friend shared how he was learning how to surrender more to God. As I listened admiring

to his transparent explanation, I wondered how he could have known that I was dealing with that same issue. To me, it was just another confirmation that I needed to work harder at surrender.

Just like babies, our strong resistance means that we know we need to let go of that one thing. For example, babies get irritable when they get sleepy. They resist most attempts to rock them to sleep by valiantly fighting. Once they stop fighting and finally drift off to sleep, they look like peaceful little angels. Similarly, we fight God and may have a hard time letting go of things like being angry, overspending, lying, sleeping around, or gossiping. Yet, as we surrender, there is a peace that comes to our hearts and our lives.

Why would anyone fight with the all-knowing, omnipotent, omnipresent God and expect to win? My friend said that it’s a natural hu-

man response to fight even if it is against God. Unlike fights that happen because of “he said/she said” misunderstandings, fights with God are usually “he said/I said I wasn’t going to obey” misunderstandings. Strangely, the thing we fight with God about is usually the thing that God knows we need most.

For myself, this past year of pandemic living has shown me that I dreaded the isolation of the quarantines and shutdowns. Sure, there were times that I fought it and binge-watched my favorite shows and movies. However, there were also times that I enjoyed authentic, intimate moments of prayer and worship with God. Had the pandemic not occurred, I’m not so sure that I would have been open to those moments of stillness and connection.

Romans 6:16 says “Do you not know that if you continually surrender yourselves to anyone to do his will, you

are the slaves of him whom you obey, whether that be to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience which leads to righteousness (right doing and right standing with God)?

Remember that God is sovereign. He has the best in mind and will do what he wants, when he wants, how he wants. We can’t live our lives like the song by Frank Sinatra and do it “our way” when we say Jesus is Lord of our life.

I think the famous bumper sticker “Jesus is my co-pilot” has it wrong: Jesus wants to be in full control.

As we begin a new year with new possibilities, think about surrendering to God. Happy New Year 2022!

Shewanda Riley is the author of “Love Hangover: Moving From Pain to Purpose After a Relationship Ends” and “Writing to the Beat of God’s Heart: A Book of Prayers for Writers.” Email preservedbypurpose@gmail.com or Twitter @shewanda.

As the new year begins

By Dr. John Warren
San Diego Voice and
Viewpoint/NNPA Member



The end of a year or a day is often a time of reflection on both what has been done and what could have been done better.

While we can’t redo yesterday, there is much ahead that we can plan for and impact in terms of tomorrow. In our homes, neighborhoods, towns, cities and states, there is room for improvement and change. The question is will we be a participant or a spectator? We can all be participants by getting involved in the issues around us and impacting the lives of ourselves and others.

In the year 2022, we are not only facing the continuation of the COVID virus, but also changes in both the electoral process and the opportunity to change those

who hold office but have worked against our common good. We must register to vote because our lives literally depend on it. We must learn the impact of changes in our electoral districts because so many of us have been gerrymandered out of political power and influence and we must reach out to our brothers and sisters in other states to help them where possible.

But before all of this, we must learn to respect each other as we would have others respect us and we must learn to work together even when we can’t see our own personal interest in the issue. So often, it’s about helping others and in doing so, we help ourselves.

Starting and ending each day with prayer and the question as to whether we have done something to help somebody other than ourselves is a good place to start.

Be blessed this new year, whether or not you are happy, and good things shall follow.

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Biden’s promise for diverse judges and federal court diversity

By Ben Jealous
People For the American Way



One of the most important reasons to vote Donald Trump out of the White House was to stop him from packing our federal courts with even more anti-voting-rights, anti-equality, pro-corporate judges.

Stopping the flood of bad Trump judges was a huge accomplishment for every organizer and voter who helped elect Joe Biden as president. And that’s only part of the good news. President Biden is making history with the most diverse set of judicial nominees ever.

Trump’s judicial nominees were overwhelmingly white men, often young and unqualified. They were almost always picked for their commitment to a right-wing judicial ideology that makes it harder for millions of Americans to count on the courts for justice. Thanks to Trump and his Republican enablers in the Senate, we will be dealing with hundreds of those judges for years to come.

Elections matter. Right now, instead of more judges hand-picked by right-wing legal activists and their corporate allies, Biden is making good on his promise to bring greater diversity to our federal courts. Biden is naming far more brilliant black judges and women judges than any other president – including Barack Obama.

Let’s look at some numbers. Because they are impressive.

More than 30 percent of Biden’s judicial nominees so far have been black. Fewer than 5 percent of Trump’s judicial picks were black.

More than a quarter of Biden’s judicial nominees have been black women. Under Trump, it was less than one percent. In fact, almost half of Biden’s judicial nominees are women of color.

Biden has been in office for less than a year, and he has already doubled the number of black women judges on the circuit courts – the highest level of federal courts below the Supreme Court. Trump named zero black judges to the circuit courts; nearly 40 percent of Biden’s circuit court nominees have been black.

There’s also a lot more diversity in Biden nominees’ life experiences and professional backgrounds. They aren’t all corporate lawyers

and law professors. Almost one-third of them have had experience as public defenders. Some of them have worked at respected civil rights organizations. Some have devoted their legal careers to protecting and representing workers. One started her career at the Legal Aid Society.

This is how we get federal courts that represent all of us, not just the most privileged and powerful.

And that brings us back to elections. Biden has been able to get his nominees confirmed – more lifetime judges at this point in his term in office since Gerald Ford – because voters in Georgia elected Sens. Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff.

If Republicans still held a Senate majority, Mitch McConnell would be slow-walking and stopping Biden’s judicial nominees. When Trump was in power, McConnell laughed and bragged about how he kept so many of Obama’s nominees from getting confirmed so that Trump would have lots of vacancies to fill.

McConnell would love to regain the power to block Biden’s judicial nominees. He would love to return to his practice of refusing to schedule hearings and votes on even the most qualified judges. He would love to abuse his power to keep hundreds of judicial seats vacant in the hopes that Trump or some other Republican will take back the White House in 2024, and bring back the flood of white, right-wing men determined to impose their ideology on the federal courts and on all of us.

We can’t let that happen.

Let’s praise the good work being done by the Biden White House and Senate Democrats. Let’s thank them for bringing balance and diversity and a commitment to equal justice for all to the federal courts. And let’s work as hard as we can to keep the Senate and White House in Democratic hands in 2022 and 2024.

Ben Jealous serves as president of People For the American Way. Jealous has decades of experience as a leader, coalition builder, campaigner for social justice and seasoned nonprofit executive. In 2008, he was chosen as the youngest-ever president and CEO of the NAACP. He is a graduate of Columbia University and Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, and he has taught at Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania.

Let the county roll on

By H Ralph Samuels Jr.
“The Name Inspires The Pen”

When I was growing up we would occasionally sing a funny little song about the antics of members in the church and how they should be dealt with when they won’t do right. I would soon learn that several versions of the song were out and one version was done by the late great Mahalia Jackson.

One of the verses was about an unruly deacon.

It said

“There’s a deacon on the board that won’t act right.

Whatcha gonna do?

Take the deacon off the board and put the board on the deacon and let the church roll on!”

Of course everyone would laugh as the song included any unruly member from the pulpit to the pew. No one was exempt. The bottom line was the church did whatever was needed to be done to any un-

ruly member or leader, so that the church would roll on.

It seems like that song should be revived and someone sing it to the Hinds County Board of Supervisors.

Residents are fed up with the mayhem of name-calling, temper tantrums, shouting matches, arrest, ego-tripping, chair shoving and more, that continues to occur over the past few years, months, and days. This constant immaturity exemplified by the Board of Supervisors must **stop**.

It appears that this board needs a lesson in common decency, plain ole common sense, respect for each other and just as important how to conduct the business of the people.

Now to be fair, all of the members of the board are not directly involved in the brouhaha that continues to ensue.

But it would seem that one of them would step forward and say, “Hey guys, enough

is enough.” Maybe they have tried to no avail, if so, that means it is up to the residents of the county to get a backbone, forget their favorite personality or preference, leave the demographics of the county out of the picture and begin to elect, ethical and honorable individuals who are really about serving others rather than themselves.

Hinds County is a great place to live. It is full of some of the most hospitable and intelligent people in the state. Sure it has its problems like all counties but the ones facing the Board of Supervisors is a problem that must be eliminated ASAP.

In the Bible, there is a passage of scripture in 1 Corinthians 6 that talks about believers going to court against one another. Verse 5 reads, “I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?”

My point with this reference is this: Is there not anyone wise enough within this administration that can mediate this matter in order that the business of the county can get on as it should?

Mahalia Jackson was in the crowd when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his “I Have A Dream Speech” in Washington in 1963. She was actually the one who said to him “Tell them about the dream, Martin,” and with that history was made.

Would to God that we had the spirit of Mahalia and Martin with us now to wake us up from this nightmare.

“There’s a super on the board that won’t act right.

Watcha gonna do?

Take the super off the board and put the board on the super and let the county roll on!”

©2021 H Ralph Samuels, Jr.
“The Name Inspires The Pen”

The truth will always keep America going in the right direction

By James B. Ewers Jr.
*President Emeritus
Teen Mentoring Committee of Ohio*



The year 2021 has been challenging and eventful. Nothing has come close to it in my lifetime.

Upon reflection some things took center stage and not always for the good. These events did not warrant a curtain call. They were shameful and shocking.

Before the shame and the shock, it is my view that COVID-19 and the variants served as the backdrop for all that went on in 2021. This virus ran roughshod over all of us. We witnessed firsthand the pain and terrible suffering caused by this once in a lifetime illness.

All of us were affected in some way. There were no detours to take. The Coronavirus came crashing into our lives. It left a path of physical anguish and mental torment that is still with us.

Yes, we have the vaccine, and it does work. The problem is not enough of us think it works. In my opinion, not taking it is a bad decision.

There are people in the United States of America that are uncontrollably stubborn. Facts, science and statistics don’t matter to them.

Reports say that about 39% of Americans are not vaccinated. That is a bad statistic. Our lives are at risk.

By not getting vaccinated and boosted, we are playing around with our lives. What we have in this country is a healthy dose of arrogance and ignorance when it comes to some issues.

Thus, the creation and beginning of “The Big Lie.” The creator of it has become a pied piper to millions of followers. The rhetoric rendered by these people is non-sensical and irrational.

Many in this camp are followers. They hear people in power and those perceived to have power say they believe

the lie. As a result, they get on the bandwagon. Slowly but surely, they are seeing that the “Big Lie” is just a bunch of fabrications woven together. It has no basis.

We as Americans have one president and one vice president and we know who they are. Those who say otherwise are unfamiliar with the rule of law.

There was an election held in November and it has been certified and verified by the court system in America. Despite this, a faction of Americans continues to spew out these untruths. My hope for the new year is that we dispel and disarm this myth once and for all.

The fact of the matter is that the “Big Lie” is simply a big lie. Many of the same people who support it are unvaccinated yet are the beneficiaries of President Biden’s Build Back America programs.

That is both hypocritical and self-serving. Their moral compass is low and has led to this

split in our America.

According to reports, the Omicron variant has been detected in every state in the Union. Now more than ever, it is important to get vaccinated and boosted.

The good news, if any, is that the symptoms are not as severe which means fewer people will pass away from it. However, some people see it differently.

Christina Ramirez, a biostatistician at the University of California, Los Angeles said, “I don’t want to be an alarmist, but I don’t think that you can let your guard down.”

Currently, there are approximately 154,000 cases daily over the past 14 days. So, as we prepare for 2022, let’s take our health more seriously. Let’s stamp out and strike down all facets of the “Big Lie.” Let us support President Biden. Get vaccinated and boosted and encourage others to do the same.

America being together and healthy beats the alternative.

GET YOUR CURRENT NEWS AND WATCH AP VIDEOS ONLINE AT:

www.mississippilink.com

LEGAL

**IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF HINDS COUNTY MISSISSIPPI
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

**IN THE MATTER OF
MARY MAGEE, DECEASED**

CAUSE NO. 21-cv-01568

VS.

**THE UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW OF
MARY MAGEE, DECEASED**

RESPONDENTS

SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

**TO: THE HEIRS-AT-LAW AND WRONGFUL DEATH BENEFICIARIES OF
MARY MAGEE, DECEASED**

You have been made respondents in the suit filed in this Court by Petitioners Michele Purvis Harris and Anita Howell, Individually and on behalf of Mary Magee, Deceased. You are summoned to appear and defend against the Amended Petition for Determination of Heirship and Wrongful Death Beneficiaries filed against you in this action on January 26, 2022, at 9 a.m. at the HINDS COUNTY CHANCERY COURTHOUSE, 316 SOUTH PRESIDENT STREET, JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, and in case of your failure to appear and defend, a judgment will be entered against you for the money or other things demanded in the Amended Petition.

You are not required to file an answer or other pleading but you may do so if you desire.

Issued under my hand and seal of said Court, this the 9 day of December, 2021.

Hon. Eddie Jean Carr,
Hinds County Chancery Clerk

BY: PW Williams, D.C.

PREPARED BY:
PIETER TEEUWISSEN, MSB # 8777
SIMON & TEEUWISSEN, PLLC
621 NORTHSIDE DRIVE
Jackson, Mississippi 39206
Telephone: 601-362-8400

COUNSEL FOR MARY MAGEE, DECEASED

12/23/2021, 12/30/2021

LEGAL

**IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE GUARDIANSHIP
OF ENRIQUA WHITE, A MINOR**

CAUSE NO. P2021-52-G/2

SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION

(The relief sought herein may affect your legal rights. You have a right to notice of any hearing on this petition, to attend such hearing, and to be represented by an attorney.)

THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

TO: UNKNOWN NATURAL FATHER OF ENRIQUA WHITE, A MINOR

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT/RESPONDENT

You have been made a Respondent to the Amended Petition for Appointment of Guardian filed in this cause by Anita Daniel, Petitioner.

You are summoned to appear and defend against the Amended Petition filed in this action at nine o'clock (9:00) a.m., on January 25, 2022, in the Hinds County Chancery Courthouse in Jackson, Mississippi, before Judge Tiffany Grove, and in case of your failure to appear and defend a judgment will be entered for the money or other relief demanded in the Amended Petition.

You are not required to file an answer or other pleading but you may do so if you desire.

Any response to the Amended Petition may be forwarded to Robyn Teague, Esq., whose street address is 1060 Whitsett Walk, Jackson, Mississippi, 39206.

Hinds County Chancery Clerk

BY: B. Teague, D.C.

Robyn Teague, Esq.
1060 Whitsett Walk
Jackson, Mississippi 39206

12/23/2021, 12/30/2021

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LEGAL

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Notice is hereby given that sealed or electronic bids will be received by the City of Jackson, Mississippi until 3:30 p.m. (local time), on the 4th day of January 2022. All bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at this time at City Hall, 219 S. President Street, Jackson, MS 39201 for the following:

BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT NO. RFP#2022-01

Contractors have the option of submitting their bids sealed in an envelope or electronically through www.centralbidding.com administered by Central Auction House. If a sealed envelope bid is submitted by mail or hand delivery, the address of City Clerk of The City of Jackson: City Hall 219 S. President Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Sealed bids may be delivered until 3:30 p.m., January 4, 2022.

Sealed bid envelopes shall be marked "SEALED BID FOR THE CITY OF JACKSON - BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT NO. RFP#2022-01 AT 3:30 PM, Tuesday, January 4, 2022, and if any envelope is not so marked, any bid contained therein will not be considered.

All bid envelopes should contain the bidder's name and mailing address on the face of the envelope. The bid shall also contain the bidder's Certificate of Responsibility number on the outside of the envelope, failing which, said bid shall not be opened or considered.

When submitting an electronic bid, the bid must be submitted in "pdf" format and shall contain the same information and forms as required for the paper bids. Electronic bids must be secured with a bid bond. When submitting a bid electronically, the authorized signature may be a hand-written blue ink signature or be an electronic signature. When bids are submitted electronically, the requirement for including a certificate of responsibility, or a statement that the bid enclosed does not exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00), on the exterior of the bid envelope shall be deemed in compliance by including the same information as an attachment with the electronic bid submittal.

Official bid documents can be downloaded from Central Auction House at www.centralbidding.com. Electronic bids shall be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions relating to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Auction House at (228) 810-4814.

A Pre-Bid Conference Call will be held at 10:30 AM on Wednesday, December 15, 2021. Please email Marilyn Guice at mguice@jacksonms.gov to receive a Zoom invite no later than Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at 5:00 pm.

The City reserves the right to reject any or all bids not conforming to the intent and purpose of the specifications, and to postpone the award of the Contract for a period of time which, however, shall not extend beyond 90 days from the bid opening date.

The City of Jackson, Mississippi hereby notifies all Bidders that it disadvantageously ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantageously and women's business enterprises will be afforded the full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

The award of this contract will be contingent upon the Contractor satisfying the DBE/WBE requirements. The DBE/WBE goal will be 6%.

12/9/2021, 12/16/2021, 12/23/2021, 12/30/2021

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

CITY OF JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

**TERRY ROAD
Pavement Rehabilitation and Sidewalk Improvements
(McDowell Road to Interstate 20)
Federal Aid Project Number: STP-7286-00(006) LPA / 108074-701000**

Sealed bids will be received by the City Council of the City of Jackson, Mississippi at the office of the Municipal Clerk, 219 South President Street, P. O. Box 17, Jackson, Mississippi 39205 until 3:30 P.M. (Local Time), Tuesday, January 25, 2022, for supplying all labor and materials (as specified) necessary for construction of TERRY ROAD Pavement Rehabilitation and Sidewalk Improvements, Federal Aid Project No. STP-7286-00(006) LPA / 108074-701000, at which time said bids shall be opened and read aloud.

The work shall consist essentially of the following items:

Pavement repairs, milling, leveling, overlay, striping, traffic signal upgrades, and sidewalk improvements on a 0.7± mile four lane section of Terry Road from McDowell Road to Interstate 20, and all other related items of work required to complete the project as shown and specified in the Contract Documents. Bidder's attention is called to Special Provision No. 7700, Scope of Work, including sequence of performing the work.

The above general outline of features of the work and how many limit the responsibility of the Contractor to perform all work and furnish all plant, labor, equipment and materials required by the specifications and the drawings referred to therein.

Contract time shall be 145 working days from the effective date shown in the Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed for each consecutive calendar day the Work has not achieved Final Completion. Liquidated Damages will be assessed in accordance with the Schedule of Deductions table in Section 108.07 of the 2017 Edition of the Mississippi Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction.

The City of Jackson hereby notifies all Bidders that it will disadvantageously ensure that any Contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantageously and women's business enterprises (DBE/WBE) will be afforded the full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award. The award of this contract will be contingent upon the Bidder satisfying the DBE/WBE requirements as prescribed by the Contract Documents.

The attention of the bidders is directed to the Contract Documents governing selection and employment of labor. Minimum wage rates have been determined by the Secretary of Labor and are subject to Public Law 87-581, Work Hours Act of 1962, as set forth in the Contract Provisions.

The Proposal and Contract Documents in their entirety shall be submitted in a sealed envelope and deposited with the Municipal Clerk, prior to the hour and date above designated. Each Bidder must also deposit with his proposal, a Bid Bond or Certified Check in an amount equal to five percent (5%) of his bid, payable to the City of Jackson as bid security. No bidder may withdraw his bid within one hundred (100) days after the date of the actual bid opening, without the City of Jackson's consent. The successful bidder shall furnish a performance and payment bond in the amount of 100% of the bid. Bidder shall also submit a current financial statement, if requested by the City.

The Official Bid Documents can be downloaded from Central Bidding at www.centralbidding.com. Electronic Bids may be submitted at www.centralbidding.com. For any questions related to the electronic bidding process, please call Central Bidding at 225-810.4814.

Work to be performed shall be in accordance with the "Mississippi State Highway Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction, 2017", together with all amendments and/or special provisions and/or addenda to the standards duly approved and adopted, unless otherwise noted in these specifications. The attention of Bidders is directed to the provisions of Subsection 102.07 pertaining to irregular proposals and rejection of bids.

Contract Drawings, Contract Specifications, and other Contract Documents are on file and open to public inspection in the office of the Engineering Division, Department of Public Works, Warren Hood Building, 4th floor, 200 S. President Street, Jackson, Mississippi. Copies of the Contract Documents, Contract Drawings and Contract Specifications may be procured at the office of the Engineer, Southern Consultants, Inc., 5740 County Cork Road, Jackson, Mississippi 39206, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Local Time, Monday through Friday, upon payment of \$100.00 for each set, which will not be refunded. Checks are to be made payable to the Engineer.

The award of a Contract, if made, will be to the lowest and responsible qualified bidder whose proposal complies with all the requirements prescribed herein and in the Contract Documents. The City of Jackson reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informalities or irregularities therein.

Charles Williams, Jr. PhD, PE
City Engineer

12/23/2021, 12/30/2021

LEGAL

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of Proposed ConnectJMN : Transit Plan for JTRAN

The City of Jackson is hosting a 45-day public comment period regarding the proposed draft recommendations in the ConnectJMN: Transit Plan (JTRAN) to gather input from the community. These recommendations are the product of a comprehensive evaluation of JTRAN's bus and paratransit services and were informed by public and stakeholder input gathered throughout the year-long study. The proposed plan can be accessed online anytime by visiting the project's website page www.jtrantransitplan.com. The full report with appendices can be viewed by visiting www.jtrantransitplan.com/final-report. An interactive executive summary can be accessed by visiting <https://bit.ly/ConnectJMN-TransitPlan>.

The plan identifies the following recommendations to improve JTRAN:

- A complete redesign of the JTRAN bus network. The New BUS Network provides 12 new routes that improve access to jobs, healthcare, groceries, and services.
- Long-term bus network investments to further improve mobility for Jackson residents and visitors. JTRAN's long-term vision plan includes new on-demand transit service, increased frequency, evening service improvements, and new Sunday service.
- Paratransit service strategies to improve the system's long-term financial sustainability, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction.
- Capital improvements, including bus stop improvement and technology upgrades, to support the delivery of safe, reliable, and efficient bus and paratransit services.

Comments will be accepted from November 24, 2021, to January 7, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. Comments may be submitted using any of the methods listed below.

WAYS TO PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS:

- Use the Share Your Comments link provided on the ConnectJMN website page: <https://bit.ly/JTRANComments>
- Mail Written Comments: 1785 Highway 80 West Jackson, MS 39204
- Complete a comment card during the public meeting

An open house style public meeting will be held to discuss the proposed plan with the public on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Union Station (300 West Capitol Street Jackson, MS).

JTRAN officials will review all comments received and will revise the plan based on feedback received and submit the final report to the Jackson City Council for review and adoption.

The City of Jackson's transit system, JTRAN, adheres to the public involvement process outlined in the Jackson MPO's Public Participation Plan. The MPO's Public Participation process satisfies the public participation requirements for FTA's notice.

Visit jtrantransitplan.com to review the proposed ConnectJMN: Transit Plan for JTRAN

12/9/2021, 12/16/2021, 12/23/2021, 12/30/2021

LEGAL

Public Notice

All interested public and private transit and paratransit operators within Hinds County, are hereby advised that the Jackson Medical Mall Foundation is applying to the Mississippi Department of Transportation, Jackson, Mississippi, for a grant under Section 5310 of the Federal Public Transportation Act, as amended, to provide transportation services to elderly and disabled persons. These services will be beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Service is being provided within Hinds County. This program consists of existing services with no environmental impact, and no relocation resulting from the project.

The purpose of this notice is to advise all interested parties, including transit and paratransit operators, of the service being planned for providing transportation services for persons with disabilities within the area as described above, and to ensure that such a program would not represent a duplication of current or of proposed services provided by existing transit or paratransit operators in the area.

Comments either for or against this service will be received at any time beginning December 27, 2021, through January 22, 2022, from 8:00am to 5:00pm. All comments should be addressed to Mr. Primus Wheeler at the Jackson Medical Mall Foundation at 601-982-8467 or via email at pwheeler@jacksonmedicalmall.org.

12/30/2021, 1/6/2022

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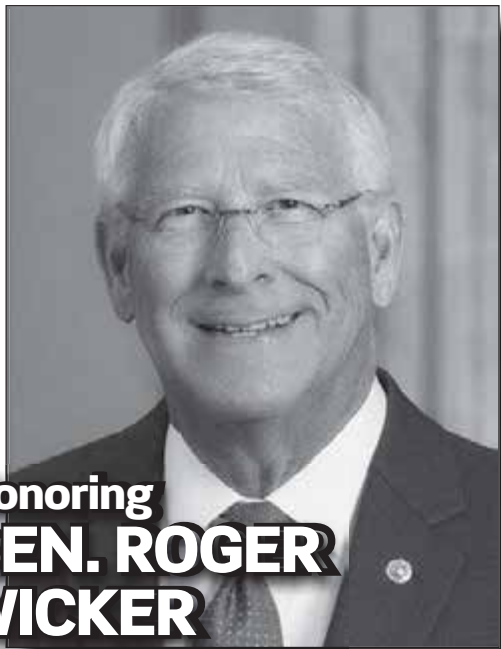
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Mississippi Press Association Education Foundation

Celebrity Roast



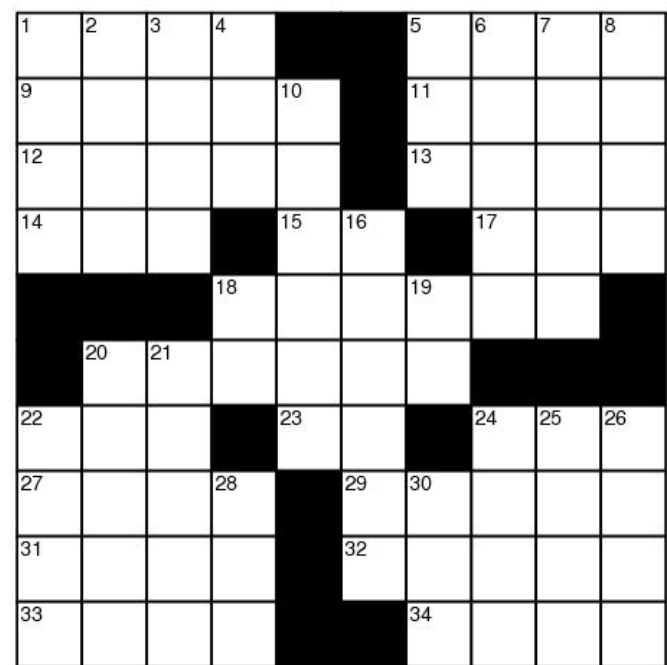
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Crossword Puzzle



- ACROSS**

 - 1. Advise
 - 5. Excuse me!
 - 9. Elite intellectuals' society
 - 11. Thin
 - 12. Wins
 - 13. ___ skin cap
 - 14. Often poetically
 - 15. Large (abbr.)
 - 17. Farm credit administration (abbr.)
 - 18. Discuss again
 - 20. Cowboy shows
 - 22. Pole
 - 23. Letter afterward
 - 24. Brim
 - 27. Self-esteems
 - 29. Cut of beef
 - 31. European monetary unit
 - 32. From that time
 - 33. Not as much
 - 34. Avidity
- DOWN**

 - 1. Convexity
 - 2. Shallow area
 - 3. Tiny insect
 - 4. Eastern Standard Time
 - 5. Most basic
 - 6. Horses feet
 - 7. Cain's eldest son
 - 8. Asian starling
 - 10. Napping
 - 16. Haunting beings
 - 18. Road (abbr.)
 - 19. Like
 - 20. Knave
 - 21. Bad smells
 - 22. Spin
 - 24. Solitary
 - 25. Ancient Indian
 - 26. Rind
 - 28. Distress call
 - 30. Laundry detergent brand

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Cryptogram

A cryptogram is a puzzle where a sentence is encoded by substituting the actual letters of the sentence with different letters. The challenge of the puzzle is to 'decode' the sentence to reveal the original English sentence. We have provided a few of the decoded letters to help get you started.

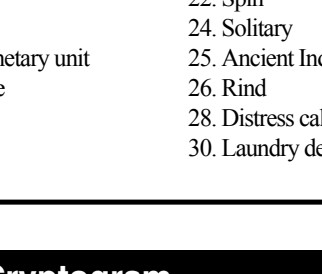
Hint: Quote by Sally Field

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
T	I	G																						

E	H	G	R		C	B	W		P	G		B	V	A		C	B	W		F	P	G		Q	B	P	G
O	G	P	J	F	N	R		B	X		Y	H	B		C	B	W		F	P	G		F	R	A		
J	H	F	J		Q	F	C		L	G		F		D	B	B	A		J	H	N	R	D		B	P	
F		L	F	A		J	H	N	R	D																	

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Crossword Solution



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Cryptogram Solution

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
F	L	O	A	G	X	D	H	N	K	Z	V	O	R	B	E	T	P	U	J	W	S	Y	M	C	I

W	H	E	N		Y	O	U	'	R	E		O	L	D	,	Y	O	U		A	R	E		M	O	R	E
Y	H	G	R		C	B	W		P	G		B	V	A		C	B	W		F	P	G		Q	B	P	G
C	E	R	T	A	I	N		O	F		W	H	O		Y	O	U		A	R	E	,	A	N	D		
O	G	P	J	F	N	R		B	X		Y	H	B		C	B	W		F	P	G		F	R	A		
T	H	A	T		M	A		B	E		A		G	O	O	D		T	H	I	N	G		O	R		
J	H	F	J		Q	F	C		L	G		F		D	B	B	A		J	H	N	R	D		B	P	
A		B	A	D		T	H	I	N	G																	
F		L	F	A		J	H	N	R	D																	

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BULLY'S RESTAURANT

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CITY HALL

219 S President St

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DOLLAR GENERAL

3957 Northview Dr (North Jackson)

DOLLAR GENERAL

2030 N Siwell Rd

DOLLAR GENERAL

4331 Highway 80W

DOLLAR GENERAL

5990 Medgar Evers Blvd

DOLLAR GENERAL

1214 Capitol St (Downtown Jackson)

DOLLAR GENERAL

304 Briarwood Dr

DOLLAR GENERAL

2855 McDowell Rd

DOLLAR GENERAL

104 Terry Rd

J & A FUEL STORES

3249 Medgar Evers Blvd.

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2325 Livingston Rd.

MCDADÉ'S MARKET

Northside Drive

MCDADÉ'S MARKET #2

653 Duling Avenue

PICADILLY CAFETERIA

Jackson Medical Mall

350 W Woodrow Wilson Avenue

SHELL FOOD MART

5492 Watkins Drive

SPORTS MEDICINE

Fortification and I-55

MURPHY USA

6394 Ridgewood Rd (North Jackson)

REVELL ACE HARDWARE

Terry Rd (South Jackson)

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380 W. Woodrow Wilson Ave

CANTON

A & I

716 Roby Street - Canton, MS

B & B

702 West North Street - Canton, MS

BOUTIQUE STORE

3355 North Liberty - Canton, MS

BULLY'S STORE

Church Street - Canton, MS

COMMUNITY MART

743 Ruby Street - Canton, MS

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HAMLIN FLORAL DESIGN

285 Peace Street - Canton, MS

JOE'S SANDWICH & GROCERY

507 Church Street - Canton, MS

K & K ONE STOP

110 West Fulton Street - Canton, MS

LACY'S INSURANCE

421 Peace Street - Canton, MS

SOUL SET BARBER SHOP

257 Peace Street - Canton, MS

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22 Westside Drive - Canton, MS

BYRAM

DOLLAR GENERAL

125 Swinging Bridge Dr.

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VOWELL'S MARKET PLACE

5777 Terry Road

CITY HALL

Terry Road

CLINTON

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TERRY

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CITY HALL

West Cunningham Avenue

RAYMOND

HINDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WELCOME CENTER

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Raymond, MS

LOVE FOOD MART

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Raymond, MS

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RAYMOND CITY HALL

110 Courtyard Square, Raymond

RAYMOND COURTHOUSE

UTICA

HUBBARD'S TRUCK STOP

Mississippi Hwy 18

PITT STOP

101 Hwy 18 & 27

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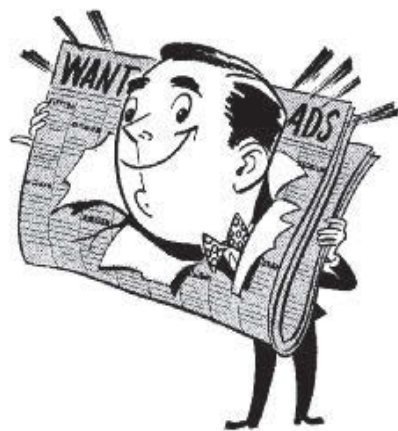
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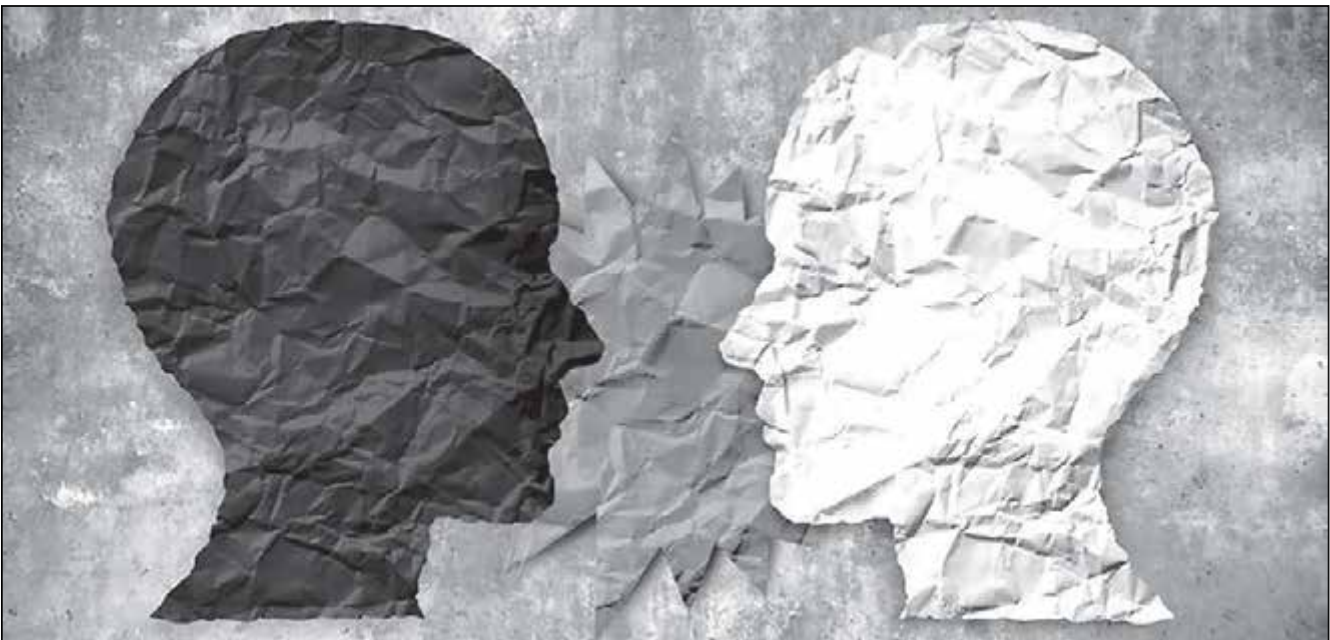
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Week of December 26, 2021

First anti-critical race theory complaint in TN targets Martin Luther King Jr. Book



Though “critical race theory” is a part of college level curriculum at law schools, the term has become a wide-ranging catch all in conservative circles. Many have loosely defined to mean any curriculum that includes efforts towards greater diversity and equity as well as discussions about how exclusion and bigotry has played a role in the shaping of American history and present-day events.

By Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Newswire Contributor

A group called Moms for Liberty has filed an 11-page complaint alleging that the book “Martin Luther King Jr and the March on Washington” is “anti-American.”

The complaint is the first to be filed under Tennessee’s new anti-critical race theory law. The new law specifically targeted a book about Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement, calling it “anti-American.”

The group Moms for Liberty is in Williamson County, Tennessee. The complaint would forbid the book to be used by teachers at Williamson County Schools, a district south of Nashville, Tenn.

The Tennessee Department of Education refused the request. The department declined to investigate the allegations because the lessons referenced were not taught during the 2020-21 academic school year.

“The relentless nature of how these divisive stories are taught, the lack of historical context and difference in perspective, and the manipulative pedagogy all work together to amplify and sow feelings of resentment, shame of one’s skin color, and/or fear,” the complaint from Moms for Liberty read.

Moms for Liberty protested a photo of segregated water fountains and images showing black children being blasted with water by firefighters during the civil rights movement.

Though “critical race theory” is a part of college level curriculum at law schools, the term has become a wide-ranging catch all in conservative circles. Many have loosely defined to mean any curriculum that includes efforts towards greater diversity and equity as well as discussions about how exclusion and bigotry has played a role in the shaping of American history and present-day events.

“Critical race theory” gained energy as an answer to the publication of the *New York Times’* 1619 Project by journalist Nicole Hannah Jones. That project greatly centered the history of African Americans and the impact of slavery in American history, politics and culture.

On November 19 in New Hampshire, the New Hampshire Department of Education made it easier for citizens to help enforce a law passed during the summer that restricts how teachers can discuss race with an online questionnaire to prompt investigations.

The state chapter of Moms for Liberty added a cash reward of \$500 for those reporting violations.

Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent journalist and the host of the podcast BURKEFILE. She is a political analyst who appears regularly on #RolandMartinUnfiltered. She may be contacted at LVBurke007@gmail.com and on twitter at @LVBurke

Officer found guilty in killing of Daunte Wright in Minnesota

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Correspondent

A jury in Minnesota has convicted former Brooklyn Center Police Officer Kim Potter on multiple manslaughter counts for the killing of Daunte Wright. Potter, who said she mistakenly grabbed her service weapon instead of a stun gun, could face a minimum of 10 years in prison when she’s sentenced.

The maximum sentence for first-degree manslaughter is 15 years and a \$30,000 fine, and for second-degree manslaughter, it’s 10 years and a \$20,000 fine.

Potter and other Brooklyn Center officers pulled Wright over for expired registration tags and an air freshener on the rearview mirror of his car. Authorities said once they realized that he had outstanding warrants, they attempted to arrest him and allegedly Wright resisted.

When he tried to get back into his car, Potter yelled “Taser,” “Taser,” and shot him with her service revolver.

Assistant Minnesota Attorney General Erin Eldridge told jurors in her closing argument that the case is “very simple,” it’s about the “reckless handling of a firearm” and “culpable negligence.”

“You don’t blindly pull your weapon, pull the trigger, without being



It’s expected that Potter will be sentenced in January.

aware of the risk,” Eldridge asserted.

Civil rights attorneys Benjamin Crump, Antonio Romanucci and Jeff Storms, who represent the family of Daunte Wright, said in a statement that the family felt a sense of relief.

“The family of Daunte Wright is relieved that the justice system has provided some measure of accountability for the senseless death of their son, brother, father and friend,” the attorneys wrote in the statement.

“From the unnecessary and overreaching tragic traffic stop to the shooting that took his life, that day will remain a traumatic one for this family and yet another example for America of why we desperately need

change in policing, training and protocols.”

The statement continued:

“If we are ever going to restore the confidence of black and marginalized Americans in law enforcement, we need to have accountability and a commitment to listening and to creating meaningful change. We must now turn our attention to ensuring that Kim Potter receives the strongest and most just sentence possible. It is also imperative that we focus on the conduct of Brooklyn Center and pinpoint its systemic failures that contributed to Daunte’s unlawful death.”

It’s expected that Potter will be sentenced in January.

\$100 million class action suit spells out racism, sexism, fraud and a tarnished blue wall at D.C.’s Metropolitan Police Department

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent

Systemic racism, sexism and sexual harassment are staples in Washington D.C.’s Metropolitan Police Department while the mayor, city council and police chief sit silently behind a blue wall colored in shame.

All of that and so much more are alleged in explosive claims made by 10 African American MPD officers. According to Civil Rights Lawyer Pamela Keith, at least 20 officers have come forward since the first action in October. Before all filings conclude, Keith said there might be hundreds more to join.

While MPD terminated some of the officers, some remained on the job. Two additional lawsuits were filed in November and a third in December. A hearing is expected in January on the lawsuits.

Keith, affiliated with the Donald Temple Law Offices in Northwest Washington, D.C., and a former United States Navy Judge Advocate, described a most toxic work culture at MPD, where she said blatant corruption, race and gender discrimination are not only tolerated but rewarded.

“All disciplinary decisions are made by one very racist guy who is very protective of white male officers,” Keith asserted. “[In one instance], white male officers covered up for another white male officer who falsely accused a young black man of a crime just to put him in the system.”

“The Internal Affairs Division report completed by a black female who had been in Internal Affairs for 19 years led to her being fired because they wanted to silence her and keep her from participating in the trial of the police officer.”

“The thing about it is the officer’s body-worn camera had all the evidence that she reported. So, they put the white officer back to work and fired the black female officer who had 29 years on the force and 19 in Internal Affairs.”

Further, Felicia Carson and Lisa Burton accused the head of the IAD of forcing them out because of their race and gender. The officers alleged the division gave preferential treatment to white officers.

“The MPD is all about a culture that protects white male officers and prioritizes them,” Keith stated.

In a statement, MPD said it “remains committed to treating all fairly and equitably.” Mayor Muriel Bowser’s office has not responded to requests for comment. Carson disagreed with MPD’s statement of fairness.

When she referred a white officer to a disciplinary review board for wrongly grabbing a young black male by the throat and lying about the reason for arresting him, MPD fired her to keep her from speaking out. She said department higher-ups canceled a disciplinary hearing for the white officer.

Keith said three years ago, the Internal Affairs Bureau had 13 black officers, including nine women. Today, the bureau has just two black female agents.

“Most of the seasoned and experienced black women agents were moved out by [the new chief] either by termination, targeted harassment and retaliation, or due to being overworked and pressured for results which forced them to quit,” Keith stated.

She said racism is rampant and the lack of discipline absent; one white officer on a presidential detail talked about shooting former First Lady Michelle Obama.

“The officer showed my client her gun and said she would kill Michelle



Obama,” Keith remarked. “It was not an empty threat; they were on the presidential detail. But nothing was done.”

Keith further described an overall unhinged department. She noted the department isolated one of her clients after arresting a white officer for drunk driving. “A citizen called in because the officer was crawling around and operating his cruiser while drunk,” Keith told NNPA Newswire. “What was my client supposed to do?”

She said there had been multiple sex harassment complaints at MPD, and when they occur, the department usually reassigns the female complainant while never punishing the male transgressor. “There’s blatant sexual harassment and blatant retaliation if a complaint is made,” Keith asserted.

“MPD has a culture of allowing people to abuse their power. They don’t check, and the instincts of the sergeants and the lieutenants are to use their power to make someone’s life miserable. There’s no mechanism to check that,” Keith said.

Keith noted a case where MPD fired cadets after they witnessed gross misconduct. She said the cadets received invitations to the home of a high-ranking MPD member who served alcohol to minors gathered there. The cadets were targeted as “bad apples,” Keith said.

“Five of my complainants are still employed at MPD, but it’s a battlefield inside of work and outside of work,” Keith insisted. “The systemic way that the police bully out those they don’t like. MPD has a deeply dysfunctional Equal Employment Office where the chief EEO officer believes his job is to protect the MPD from claims and not to investigate.”

“We have three sworn affidavits where officers were told to find negative things on those making complaints. The complaints would go to the accused officer. Also, the minute you file a complaint, our officers find themselves investigated by Internal Affairs, so many people remain silent. In four years, the EEO has not substantiated a single claim of gender or race discrimination. The fired officers seek reinstatement and back pay and other monetary damages.

The lawsuit also asks the MPD and the city to establish a \$100 million fund for “700 black women who would be part of the class action going back ten years,” Keith said.

The Boston College Law School graduate noted that precedent is on her clients’ side.

“Individual compensation for typical EEO cases would usually be about \$300,000 each. In a whistleblower case, which is the second of these cases, that tends to involve a lot of money,” Keith continued.

“In Los Angeles, there was a whistleblower case against the LAPD where the plaintiff got \$8 million. We have a \$5 million claim for each of the officers here because what they’ve been through is insane. We have the confession of one of the sergeants who admitted retaliation. We have her on tape.”

“O Tannebaum, O Tannebaum”

By Paulette Patton
Guest Writer

When Ernst Anschütz, penned O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree such pleasure do you bring me...I wonder if he envisioned seeing eight trees in one house.

“Well the little girl in me likes to come out and play,” says Yolanda Alexander Martin. So the “little girl” came out during the pandemic to keep herself busy and balanced. What better way than to have a Christmas tree in most of the rooms in your home.

Each tree has a thematic element. Martin said in order to contain herself she gave each tree a theme. There is the Safari Tree, the Blue Aztec Tree, the Western Tree, The Family Tree, the Seascape/Nautical Tree, the Food Items Tree, the Nature Tree and the Black and White Tree.

When asked how long it took to decorate the trees, she said, “It depends.”

Last year she started during Halloween and finished at Thanksgiving. This year took longer because of life disruptions. She couldn’t be as consistent in getting the trees decorated as the previous year so she just took her time.

There is something magical about Christmas trees with just lights but when you add ornaments they come alive, such as the Family Tree.

Martin enjoys the memory each ornament represents. Some trees include ornaments given to her by former students. She taught school for thirty years in the Jackson Public School System. She said each ornament reminds her of that student or the memory of a family heirloom, or a place she and her husband have travelled.

Martin is married to her high school sweetheart, Perry Martin. If that name sounds familiar it is because he worked for the Jackson Police Department for years and retired from the Hinds County Sheriff’s Department.

When asked about his wife’s passion for decorating trees, he said, “She keeps at a project and by the time she is happy with it, everyone else is crazy.”

Martin was born in Jackson and says that she gets her creativity from her 93 year old mother, Evalette Patton, who enjoys seeing all the Christmas trees.

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree we learn from all your beauty...



A Christmas touch everywhere

PHOTOS BY GAIL M. BROWN



Food Tree



Nature Tree



Family Tree



Yolanda and husband Perry



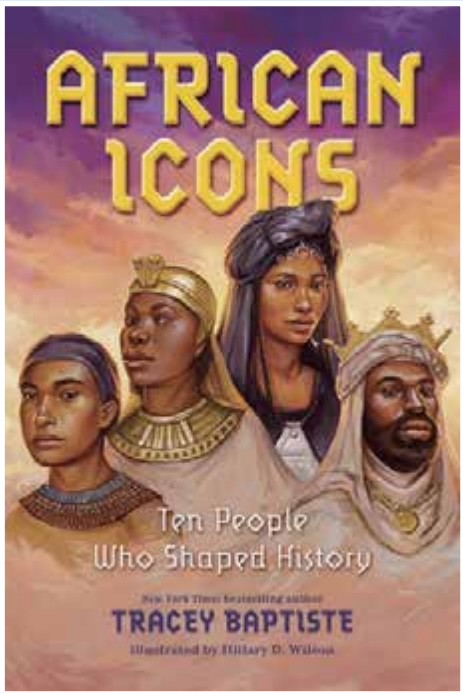
Black & White Tree



Blue Aztec Tree



Seascape Tree



BOOK REVIEW:

AFRICAN ICONS:
TEN PEOPLE WHO SHAPED HISTORY

BY TRACEY BAPTISTE, ILLUSTRATED BY HILLARY D. WILSON

C.2021, ALGONQUIN YOUNG READERS

\$19.95 / HIGHER IN CANADA • 176 PAGES

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
Columnist

The stories you love best are filled with excitement and power. Sometimes, they make you laugh; other times, they make you think. You like funny stories and silly ones, tales that make your eyes pop and tales that make your hands sweat. You like the old fables, too, the ones that teach you something. So come meet warriors, rulers, writers and schemers in “African Icons” by Tracey Baptiste. When she was just a little girl,



Baptiste’s father told her a story. Years later, she learned that what he told her was “one of the most popular stories throughout the continent of Africa” and that many of the tales she loved had roots there. “Not only is Africa the second largest continent on Earth,” she says, but that its people have always had “rich lives,” a fascinatingly complex culture, and tales to tell. For instance, one of the first large communities in Africa was established along the banks of the Nile River in Egypt. There

were many “minor kings” there then but King Menes hoped to grow his kingdom, and he did it by conquering the areas he wanted. Then he declared that the falcon god, Horus, had “bestowed the kingship of Egypt” on Menes himself – and who could argue with a god? Queen Merneith, who was Menes’ granddaughter, grew up in luxury and comfort and was “raised to rule.” Alas, her brother, Djjet, ascended to the throne first but Merneith had the last word. She became one of her brother’s wives and when their

son, Den, was ten years old, he became king and Merneith stepped in as regent. This gave Den the chance to learn to rule the kingdom, while Merneith held all the power. Imhotep was a leader, but he was also a doctor, an advisor and an engineer who built temples and tombs. Aesop was a wise storyteller whose tales you might’ve heard. Hannibal was a soldier who enjoyed many victories over Rome more than 2200 years ago. Terence of Carthage was an accomplished playwright. And Tin Hinan es-

tablished a desert society where women and girls made the rules. All those stories we all grew up hearing, all those wonderfully puzzling tales we read and re-read, they had to come from somewhere. Author Tracey Baptiste says their roots lay in Africa and in “African Icons,” she explains how fables and legends are often real. But if that sounds dry, hold up. It’s not, if you’re a kid. Got a child who’s into action figures? This book will speak to that love, with general (not-

too-detailed) tales of kingdoms conquered. Kids who crave stories of princesses, palaces and magic carpets will be happy with this book’s sense of glitter and exoticness. Children who really love mummies will be fascinated by accounts of pharaohs and pyramid-builders in tales that are true, lively, kid-friendly, and fun to read, even if you’re an adult. Still, the best audience for this book is much younger. For kids ages 8-14, “African Icons” may hold the stories they love best.



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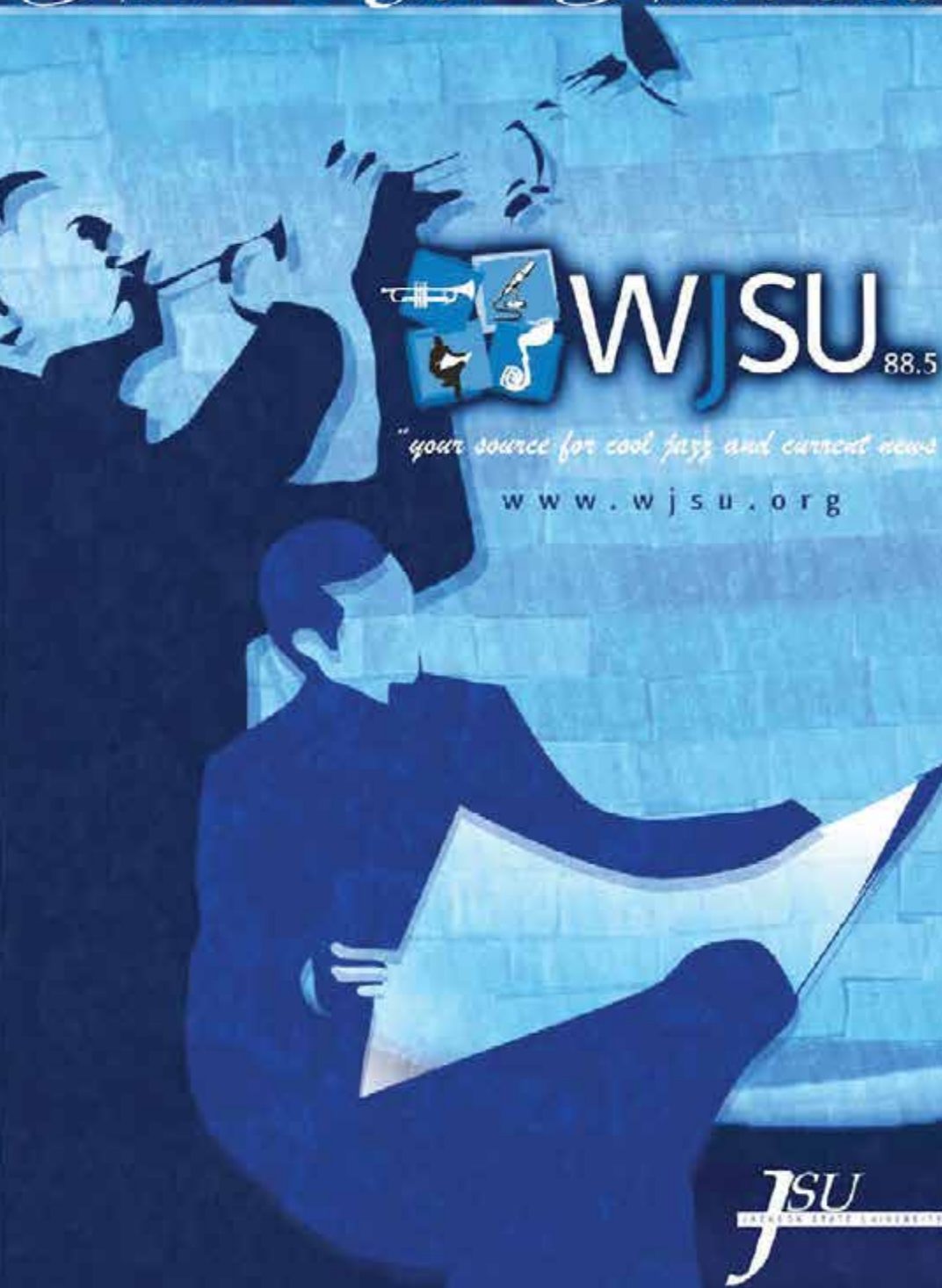

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Hinds County School District Weekly Update

ENGAGING-EMPOWERING-ENSURING-EXCELLENCE

‘Tis the season

‘Tis the season to be giving! The Hinds County School District actively participated in several community service projects during the season. Through community service projects, we hope to teach our students the importance of being responsible citizens.



Carver Middle School Social Studies teacher, Samantha Cross, is pictured with a few of the over 900 cans collected by the Carver Social Studies department.



Byram Middle School students pose with books and supplies collected by the Social Studies department.



Byram Middle School students pose with books and supplies collected by the Social Studies department.



Carver Middle School Social Studies classes worked to “Deck the Walls” at nursing homes by writing cards, writing letters, and drawing pictures for nursing home residents that will be unable to make it home for the holidays.



Devon Gordon and Nathan Cooke of the THS Student Council pose with members of the food service taff after treating them to a breakfast



Devon Gordon and Nathan Cooke of the THS Student Council pose with members of the janitorial Staff after celebrating their contributions to the school.



Terry High School Food Service and Janitorial Staff enjoy treats prepared by the Student Council.

Strength Siding and Roofing/ Direct Auto partnership with HCSD to provide toys for less fortunate families



Strength Siding and Roofing, Direct Auto, and the Hinds County School District partnered to provide toys to families in need. Pictured are representatives of Strength Siding and Roofing with Dr. Bill Sellers, Dr. Delesicia Martin, and Dr. John Neal of the Hinds County School District.



Toy donations



Toy donations



Dr. John Neal, Dr. Delesicia Martin, Dr. Bill Sellers



I'm a mom first.

I may be Dr. Nina Ford Johnson a pediatrician, but I'm a mom first. My babies are my top priority, always. With COVID going around affecting Black kids at a higher rate, I'm telling any parent with children 5 and older to get the COVID vaccine.



Brought to you by the
U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services.

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